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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

A. E. Carter, of the French Department in the University of Manitoba, has been a frequent and welcome contributor to the Quarterly.

J. B. Conacher is Lecturer in History in the University.

Roy Daniells is Professor of English in the University of British Columbia.

Eugene Joliat, Associate Professor of French in University College, is the author of *Smollett et la France* (1935).

Hans Jonas is Associate Professor of Philosophy in Carleton College, Ottawa.

Henry S. Leonard is a member of the Philosophy Department at Michigan State College.

Hugh MacLennan, author of *Barometer Rising* (1941) and *Each Man's Son* (1951)—to mention only his earliest and most recent novels—has just joined the English Department at McGill University.

Millar MacLure is Professor of English in United College, Winnipeg.

Otakar Odlozilik, of the History Department at Columbia University, was Professor of Czechoslovak History at Charles University, Prague, from 1934 to 1939.

Desmond Pacey, Professor of English in the University of New Brunswick, is the author of a biography of F. P. Grove and the editor of *A Book of Canadian Stories* (1947, 1950).

A. F. W. Plumptre, of the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, was formerly a student of J. M. Keynes at Cambridge and, more recently, a teacher of Political Economy at Toronto.

Gordon Roper is Associate Professor of English at Trinity College.

J. Percy Smith is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Saskatchewan.

Francis J. Thompson is a member of the Department of Writing, Speech and Drama at the Johns Hopkins University.

MASARYK'S IDEA OF DEMOCRACY*

OTAKAR ODLOZILIK

SOME twenty-five years ago a German daily sent letters to prominent persons of that time asking whom they would recommend as president, should the United States of Europe be created. The late George Bernard Shaw replied at once, naming Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, then President of Czechoslovakia.

In those years which seem to be so remote and different from the present time, the chances of international co-operation were fairly good. The Locarno Pact was accepted with a sigh of relief despite the fact that it applied only to western Europe. The Soviet Union continued to boycott the League of Nations, but was not so sharply opposed to dealings with Western democracies as in the period of revolution and of foreign intervention. The project of a European union was still in the realm of visions, and not much was achieved by its sponsors to make it acceptable even in principle. But an air of optimism pervaded the world during the middle twenties, and prospects of international co-operation were brighter at that time than ever before or afterwards.

In that period of peace and prosperity, Masaryk's life and work reached their culmination. Born on March 7, 1850, he was then about seventy-five years of age but unbent by the duties of his high office. A belief that the post-war difficulties had been settled and that his nation had successfully overcome the ills of childhood, was the mainspring of Masaryk's activities during the middle twenties. He was vigorous and optimistic, and shaped with firm hand the destinies of his people. More than ever before he was convinced that democracy is the best system of government and that every effort should be made to defend it against any dictatorial tendency. When wilful critics cited the weaknesses and shortcomings of the democratic system, he recommended as the only remedy a larger dose of freedom—to be sure, of true freedom.[1]

Masaryk entered into the history of mankind as the staunchest supporter of democracy. He made his name as an eager and ardent

*Delivered in part as a Masaryk Memorial Lecture under the auspices of the Department of History, University of Toronto, February 27, 1951.

[1]Masaryk's message on the first Independence Day, October 28, 1919, appeared in the *Czechoslovak Review* (Chicago), III, 1919, 382-6. The relevant passage runs there as follows: "It may be that republican liberty is here and there badly understood, and that it has its bad effects. But I am convinced that against liberty the only remedy is more liberty and true liberty."

interpreter of political theories derived from the legacies of both the American and the French revolutions. He secured a prominent place among the statesmen and rulers of the time by his consequent application of the democratic creed. The question arises how he had become acquainted with the democratic concept of government and what were the principal sources from which he had drawn his inspiration for both political theory and practice. A few remarks about conditions in central Europe, prior to the First World War, should be made as a partial answer to this question.

Thomas Masaryk was born soon after the victory of the reactionary forces in Austria over the revolutionary movements of 1848. The schools to which he was sent were controlled by the state authorities and their principal aim was to teach, in addition to the prescribed subjects, loyalty to the Imperial house and to the sovereign. The collapse of the absolutist régime after ten years of experiment and the restoration of the constitutional system in the eighteen-sixties brought about only a partial improvement. The Austrian constitution of 1867 was fairly liberal as far as fundamental rights were concerned. The corresponding articles of the Hungarian constitution were either identical or even more liberal. Judged by the two charters, the Habsburg Empire was a constitutional monarchy with parliaments and representative governments in its two parts, Austria and Hungary, and in their respective capitals, Vienna and Budapest. But the outward signs and appearances were misleading, and a wide gap existed between the lofty principles and the realities of everyday life.

Masaryk said on various occasions that his main field was neither philosophy, which he had studied at Vienna, nor sociology which he taught at the University of Prague, but politics. In his war memoirs, *The Making of a State*, he confessed that he never wanted to be a professor, but a diplomat and a politician.[2] He was twice a member of the Austrian Imperial Council, first from 1891 to 1893, and later from 1907 to 1914, and had made Austria and the whole structure of the monarchy the subject of careful investigation. He soon realized that under the constitutional and liberal veneer of the nineteenth century the feudal past survived as a grim reality. The Imperial court retained its dominant position and was supported by four mighty pillars: the landed nobility, the hierarchy, the army, and the bureaucracy. Parliaments were regularly called to transact business relating to home affairs, but the Emperor Francis Joseph disliked any interference of the deputies with either the army or foreign policy. During

[2] *The Making of a State: Memoirs and Observations, 1914-18*, English version with introduction by Henry Wickham Steed (London, 1927), 291.

the most critical period in Austrian history, from 1908 to 1914, the Vienna parliament was paralysed by nationalistic struggles and it was by-passed by the court circles at such a decisive moment as the declaration of war on Serbia by Austria-Hungary late in July, 1914.

It follows from these few facts that Masaryk's training in and for democracy was neither promoted by school nor facilitated by practical experience as a professor or member of parliament. Austrian universities from their reform in 1849 to the extinction of the monarchy offered very little in subjects designated by the term political science. Masaryk himself gained distinction as the pioneer of sociological studies among the Czechs and Slovaks. He struggled with misunderstanding and opposition on the part of conservative circles. His promotion to a full professorship was retarded by underhand action and he was criticized for his lectures in which such problems as suicide, sex relations, chauvinism, ritual murder, were discussed.

An average political leader in central Europe relied for training in political theory on newspapers, pamphlets dealing with current problems, and a limited number of books available either in his own language or in German. Liberalism was the vogue in central Europe during Masaryk's formative years as an antidote to clerical influences which dominated the Empire during the eighteen-fifties and the early sixties. Knowledge of liberal tenets was seldom derived from original sources. Central European politicians were usually satisfied with a diluted form of the liberal creed as presented by the metropolitan journalists, and they accepted the gulf between the letter of the constitution and its practical application as a necessary evil.

Masaryk differed in many respects from the conventional pattern and chose his own way. We know that during his university studies he became familiar with the *System of Logic* by John Stuart Mill which according to Leslie Stephen became a kind of sacred book for students who claimed to be genuine liberals.[3] But the time for an intensive study of political ideas and institutions really came only after Masaryk's graduation and during his post-doctoral studies. There is an interesting passage in *The Making of a State* which may serve us as a key to Masaryk's personality:

> At home and in Vienna parochialism oppressed me, the parochialism of Prague and the characteristic parochialism of Austria. Pettiness does not proceed from geography but from men, characters, manners. One does not become a citizen of the World merely by travel of the ordinary sort, or by official international intercourse, but by penetrating spiritually

[3] *The English Utilitarians* (London, 1900), III, 76.

into the life of individuals, of nations and of mankind. It was my own great good fortune and happiness, that in my journey through life I met Charlotte Garrigue, in whom French blood and American vigour were united. Without her I should never have seen clearly either the sense of life or my own political task. Thus France and America helped me and, through me, helped our nation to win beneficent freedom.[4]

Masaryk met Charlotte Garrigue, a native of Brooklyn, in the summer of 1877 at Leipzig where she studied music. They both lived in a boarding house managed by Frau Göring and their friendship gradually developed into a romance. Their wedding took place on March 15, 1878, on this side of the Atlantic, in the Town Hall of Brooklyn. Both at Leipzig and later in Prague, Masaryk and his wife spent many hours reading together. At Leipzig it was chiefly T. H. Buckle's *History of Civilisation* which kept them busy for a great many days. After Buckle came other authors and thinkers, English and American. Mill's *Subjection of Women* figured in the reading list, with some poetry and prose.[5] It is worth while mentioning that Charlotte G. Masaryk had a share in a Czech translation of Mill's treatise which appeared in Prague in 1890.

It would be incorrect to assume that Masaryk's was an exceptional case and that no other student of English and American thought rose to prominence in central Europe. Among the German-speaking Austrians, Magyars, and Poles a lively interest in political theory existed even before the fall of the absolutist régime in 1848. The Czech and Slovak intellectual leaders suffered more from isolation which was caused by a strict control of the book market under Metternich. When the rigid censorship was abolished, they availed themselves of the opportunity and engaged in studies of advanced political systems of such countries as Switzerland, Belgium, France, England, and the United States. Frantisek Ladislav Rieger, who was to dominate the Czech political scene during the eighteen-seventies and eighties, had drawn information concerning the United States from such a rich source as *La Démocratie en Amérique* by Alexis de Tocqueville. Rieger's contemporary, Karel Havlicek, an eminent journalist to whom Masaryk acknowledged his indebtedness many times, pointed out the differences between the Latin republics of the Western Hemisphere and the United States in an article which appeared in his weekly *Slovan* in February, 1851.[6]

After the re-establishment of constitutional freedom in Austria,

[4]*The Making of a State*, 295.

[5]Karel Capek, *President Masaryk Tells His Story* (London, 1934), 116-17.

[6]Rieger quoted from De Tocqueville in his speeches in the Constituent Assembly at Kromeriz-Kremsier; see his *Reci*, I, 137, 181. Havlicek's article is in his *Politicke spisy*, III, 633-44.

the interest in political studies increased by leaps and bounds. Both the conservative and the progressive spokesmen of the National party endeavoured to compensate by extensive reading of either original works or selected translations for their lack of personal contacts. The leader of the National party, Frantisek Palacky, often acclaimed as the father of the nation, was fluent in English from his student years in Bratislava. His son-in-law and chief lieutenant, F. L. Rieger, visited England in 1850, when living in western Europe as a voluntary exile. From Rieger's circle came the inspiration for such undertakings as the translation into Czech of the *History of England* by Thomas Babington Macaulay—the work went to press immediately after the abolishment of censorship in Austria and appeared on the market in 1861.

Under the impact of liberal principles, the National party split into two bodies, known currently as the Old Czech and the Young Czech parties. They both suffered from an excessive concentration on purely domestic issues, but some brighter minds among them sought an escape from parochialism in the study of the renowned champions of progressive thought. The knowledge of conditions in the United States was promoted by reports from the centres of Czech immigrants most of whom went to the Middle West, attracted there by the riches of the soil. Josef V. Sladek, a poet and essayist, spent two years in Wisconsin and published, apart from sketches of American life, two major studies of the United States, one devoted to the constitution of the United States (1871), and the other to the first century of the North American republic (1876). As they both appeared in a leading Czech magazine, they were widely read and gave the Czech public a fairly accurate picture of the American system.[7]

When during the eighteen-eighties Masaryk prepared for his entry into the political arena, he read voraciously both in Czech and in other languages. He collaborated closely with one of his university colleagues, Dr. Josef Kaizl, an economist and later Austrian minister of finance. Another member of the trio was Karel Kramar who for a long period had held the leading position among the Young Czechs, and became the first prime minister of Czechoslovakia after its liberation. Kaizl was well acquainted with literature on political and economic problems—an entry in his diary for 1884 has a reference to *Utilitarianism* by John Stuart Mill.[8] Kramar on the other hand,

[7]They were first published in *Osveta*, I, VI and then reprinted in *Americke obrazky*, III, 29-106, 107-86.

[8]See Dr. Josef Kaizl, *Z meho zivota*, II, 77.

having spent some time in Paris as a student at the Ecole libre des Sciences politiques, had gravitated toward France before he was caught in the nets of hazy Pan-Slavism.

It was, indeed, Masaryk's good fortune to have a living interpreter of English and American thought in the person of his wife. She maintained correspondence with her American relatives and friends and provided for a regular flow of American publications into their Prague home. Masaryk visited the United States for the second time in 1902, when he lectured at the University of Chicago during the summer session. He came again in 1907, to attend the Congress of Free Religions in Boston. But the fourth visit was the most fruitful one. He came from Russia via Siberia and Japan, landed in Vancouver late in April, 1918, and proceeded from there to Chicago and other centres.

It may be said without exaggeration that during his fourth and last visit Masaryk discovered the United States as a living and working democracy. His earlier explorations were mostly limited to the literary and philosophical fields. In 1918 he came to the United States as a recognized leader of the Czechs and Slovaks struggling for liberation. He established contacts with journalists, diplomats, and statesmen to promote the Czechoslovak cause. There was no time for systematic studies of political theories. Chapters in *The Making of a State* relating to Masaryk's activities in the United States reveal his interest in Thomas Paine, Theodore Parker, and Daniel Webster, but Thomas Jefferson was not mentioned.[9] It is also evident that Masaryk was fascinated by Abraham Lincoln whose fate undoubtedly lingered in his memory.

In the United States Masaryk put final touches on his programme of post-war reconstruction. During the stormy months of the winter of 1917-18, while still in Russia, he summed up his analysis of the war and formulated his proposals for the peace settlement. Rewritten during the sea voyage from Japan to Vancouver, the text served Masaryk as an *aide-mémoire* during his conversations with American statesmen. After a thorough revision the work was published in October, 1918 for private circulation under the title *The New Europe*.

In the early stage of the war Masaryk was not opposed to the monarchical system. In a confidential memorandum submitted in April, 1915 to British statesmen he spoke of Bohemia and proposed that it should be a constitutional monarchy.[10] Once he rejected his original idea, the question was which of the republican systems then

[9] *The Making of a State*, 216-17.
[10] R. W. Seton-Watson, *Masaryk in England* (London, 1943), 133.

existing should be chosen as a pattern for Czechoslovakia. Masaryk knew of the Swiss and French types, and wished to use them as models for some laws and institutions. But his consideration of the matter resulted in a desire to create more than a smoothly running administrative machine.

As he read De Tocqueville's work and Lord Bryce's *The American Commonwealth* he realized that the ideas of the Founding Fathers permeated the American system of government.[11] Their respect for religion and morality impressed him more than any other feature. The scrutiny of American principles was connected with his studies of the legacy of Czech and Slovak thinkers which he had pursued since his coming to Prague.

It is not difficult to see parallels between his earlier ideas and his scheme for the Czechoslovak democracy as conceived in the United States. In the eighteen-nineties Masaryk had placed before his countrymen a question: "What place should the Czech people occupy among other nations in Europe and what is the position of the Czechs in the development of mankind?"[12] Many a reader of Masaryk's *Ceska otazka,* familiar with political squabbles and party feuds, was puzzled by such questions, which were regarded as an infusion of metaphysical elements into purely political matters. Veterans of party battles shook their heads at this political tyro who strove to lift politics above the intricate game of give and take, and to justify the struggle of the Czechs for independence by emphasizing the sacred right of any people to self-determination. But neither by sneers nor by vehement attacks had Masaryk been shaken in his conviction that the independent existence of his people must be deeply rooted in a political philosophy and governed by it in matters transcending the turmoil of everyday life. Hence his interest in the underlying ideas of the American democracy.

A thorough analysis of Czech intellectual and political history, summarized in *Ceska otazka* and several other writings in Czech, convinced Masaryk that the domestic tradition had been several times broken by subjugation of the Czech people to foreign rule. He concluded that it was not organic and cohesive enough to serve as a cement for the heterogeneous elements that were to be incorporated into the framework of the envisaged state. Nor was there much of

[11]See Masaryk's speech of October 28, 1919, in the *Czechoslovak Review,* III, 1919, 383.

[12]Both the *Ceska otazka* [*The Czech Question*] and some other books in Czech have been analysed by S. H. Thomson in his illuminating study, "T. G. Masaryk and Czech Historiography," *Journal of Central European Affairs,* X, 1950, 37-52.

value in the structure of the declining monarchy that could be used in the groundwork of the Republic. His daily experience and contacts with both leading citizens and the man in the street convinced Masaryk that the American and Czech traditions are congenial. This conclusion strengthened Masaryk's decision to graft the American concept of democracy upon the Czechoslovak stem. Thus he hoped to secure not only a successful start but also a smooth working of democratic institutions in a region where political freedom had been curbed by absolutist practices and where training for self-government had been denied to the citizens by the all-powerful bureaucracy.

Masaryk's determination to follow in the footsteps of the architects of the North American union had matured before the war actually ended and the fate of Austria-Hungary was sealed. The Declaration of Independence of the Czechoslovak nation which was drafted by Masaryk and promulgated in Washington on October 18, 1918, on behalf of the Provisional Government expressly linked the future Czechoslovakia with the American democracy in stating: "We, the nation of Comenius cannot but accept these principles expressed in the American Declaration of Independence, the principles of Lincoln and of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. . . ."[13]

Two statements from the post-war period must be quoted to show what motivated Masaryk's decision in favour of the American pattern of democracy. In *The Making of a State* he described his pilgrimage to Gettysburg and concluded as follows: "In the cemetery on the Gettysburg battlefield and in other places my mind often dwelt on the idea that our Czechoslovak State would resemble America in that we have no dynasty of our own and no liking for a foreign dynasty; that we have no aristocracy, no army and no military tradition. . . . American civilization appeals to me, and I believe it also appeals to our emigrants who form a notable section of our race. In America we can and should learn not only the mechanical side of things but love of freedom and individual freedom."[14] On another occasion, on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Republic, Masaryk publicly acknowledged the share of the United States in the launching of his country. Speaking to an American correspondent he said: "The United States, in a sense, is Czechoslovakia's foster parent. We have not forgotten that it is upon President Wilson's immortal charter of freedom, as embodied in his famous Fourteen Points, that the foundations of our State are laid. . . . We covet nothing from

[13]The English version of the Declaration appeared in the *Czechoslovak Review*, II, 1918, 174-5.
[14]*The Making of a State*, 213, 215.

our neighbors and have tried to pattern our young republic after that of our great sponsor, the United States. Our constitution and our laws, our mode of Government and even our business methods follow closely those of the United States."[15]

Though formulated several years later these statements reflect the atmosphere of the exciting period when the Allied victory was definitely assured and the liberation of the Czechoslovak people was near at hand. Assuming that the United States would play a prominent role not only at the peace conference, but also in launching the League of Nations, Masaryk felt confident that his endeavour to transplant the cardinal principles of American democracy into the soil of central Europe would meet with success.

Masaryk possessed the zeal and moral courage of the prophets and reformers. He shunned tactical compromise or half measures when vital problems were to be settled. It would be a gross injustice to impute to him the intention of copying mechanically the system prevailing in the United States. As a shrewd observer he knew that imported constitutions often served as a façade for oligarchic and corrupt régimes, and that they merely floated on the agitated waves of public life. He wished to save Czechoslovakia from internal struggles and convulsions by welding the American principles with the inheritance of the leading Czech and Slovak figures into an organic unity. He conceived of the Czechoslovak democracy as an embodiment of the traditional longing for political freedom, social justice, and a fair distribution of economic resources. These trends he discovered in the writings of the champions of the Reformation and of the national revival, among both the Czechs and the Slovaks.

Influenced by such analyses and considerations Masaryk modified the prevalent concept of democracy by an admixture of religious elements and thus developed the theme of his writings in Czech from the pre-war era.

In his academic lectures and in books dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Masaryk had revealed himself as a true son of the nineteenth century and had proudly acknowledged his indebtedness to the principles of the American and the French revolutions. He had made no secret of his leaning toward rationalism and had loudly professed his belief in the advance of mankind from lower to higher stages of development. His participation in the Congress of Free Religions in 1907 had been by no means accidental. It can be rightly interpreted as a manifestation of his passionate

[15]The interview was published in the *New York Times*, Oct. 29, 1928.

search for a concept of Christianity that would be acceptable to modern man deprived by scepticism of the simple belief of the medieval faithful, yet yearning for peace of soul. In his analytical studies of the national tradition, Masaryk had emphasized the ideal of humanity, maintaining that its formulation by such figures as Joseph Dobrovsky, Jan Kollar, Frantisek Palacky, and Karel Havlicek was but a modern expression of the Christian principles on which the Reformers, John Hus, Peter Chelcicky, and John Amos Comenius, based their programmes. Masaryk admitted that the Reformers cloaked their ideas in religious terminology, but he believed that the humanitarianism of the nineteenth century strove for the same objectives as the Reformation.

Masaryk's dictum that "democracy is the political organisation of society resting on the ethical foundation of humanitarianism,"[16] is related to his efforts to bridge over the gap in the spiritual development of the Czech people, caused by their subjection to foreign rule. The formula indicates that he wished to infuse the ideal of humanity into the body of Czechoslovak democracy in order to secure historical continuity and to enhance the stability of the old-new nation.

Some of Masaryk's public speeches and private utterances from either the twenties or early thirties are more specific than the above-mentioned definition of democracy. If examined systematically, they would show a steady progress from vague humanitarianism toward distinctly Christian principles. In a speech delivered before the National Assembly on the tenth anniversary of independence he spoke as follows:

> The building up of a truly democratic republic is an act of great faith: faith in right and justice, faith in historical mission, faith in the future. We have this faith and therefore we can revive the spirit of joy and love with which we stood ten years ago on the threshold of our own home. We were more unanimous then; today, however, there are more of us. We saw paradise on earth before us at that time but heaven on earth is never completely realized; it exists in us as good will, mutual service, a thirst for justice, and above all as active love towards our fellow-citizens and towards all people of good will. We have our state in order that in it we may strive for the attainment of the best régime, I might say for the Kingdom of God; I believe that, although we are often unaware of it, we are being led towards that goal by destiny, Providence.[17]

In conversations with Karel Capek, Masaryk formulated his views

[16] *The New Europe* (London, 1918), 68.

[17] "Speech of T. G. Masaryk," *Czechoslovak Sources and Documents*, no. 4, 1928, 10-11.

even more precisely than he had done in public speeches or articles. When asked what he would give as his own and strongest argument for democracy, Masaryk answered: "The strongest argument for democracy—faith in man, in his spirit and immortal soul; that is true, metaphysical equality. Ethically democracy is based on the political realization of love of one's neighbour. The eternal to the eternal cannot be indifferent, the eternal cannot misuse the eternal, it cannot exploit and violate it."[18]

As the talk went on, Capek reminded his illustrious interlocutor how he, Masaryk, had vehemently opposed the concept of theocracy as espoused by the absolutist monarchs, pretending to rule by the grace of God. To this Masaryk promptly replied by expanding his principal point. "I am not frightened of words, I have nothing against that expression if you take theocracy literally as the rule of God. I conceive the State, national life, politics, like the whole of life, in truth *sub specie aeternitatis*. True democracy founded on love and respect for one's neighbour, and towards all neighbours, is the realization of the rule of God on earth. Democracy is not only a form of government, it is not only what is written in constitutions; democracy is a view of life, rests on faith in men, in humanity and in human nature, and there is no faith without love; there is no love without faith."

Masaryk's idea of democracy cannot be expressed by a simple formula. To grasp it we must start from his criticism of the diluted liberalism with which he became acquainted in Vienna. We then proceed to his investigation of the spiritual and moral trends among the Czechs and Slovaks. The final task is an evaluation of Masaryk's experiences and observations during his fourth visit to the United States. The progress from the early definitions toward his final words on democracy as recorded by Karel Capek was gradual and organic. It was determined both by theoretical studies and by direct participation in politics. Masaryk's idea of democracy became a living programme in 1918 and was successively tested during the seventeen years of his presidency.

It would be futile to pass in silence over some weak points or even miscalculations which imperilled Masaryk's pioneer work. From his entry into politics Masaryk studied socialist programmes and devoted one of his major works, *The Social Question*, to a thorough analysis of Marxism.[19] While in Russia in 1917 and early 1918 he

[18] *Masaryk on Thought and Life: Conversations with Karel Capek* (London, 1938), 190-1.

[19] The book appeared in 1898 in Czech as *Otazka socialni*, and then, in 1899, in a German version, *Die philosophischen und sociologischen Grundlagen des Marxismus: Studien zur socialen Frage* (Vienna).

witnessed the rise of Bolshevism. He was also thoroughly acquainted with Pan-Germanism in its concrete manifestations. But the study of Masaryk's *New Europe*, and of his war memoirs, reveals that he was more afraid of a resurgence of the defeated enemy than of the emergence of new, or old-new foes of democracy. The edge of his criticism and invectives turned more often against the guardians of the absolutist, monarchical, and feudal spirit who survived the defeat of the Central Powers, than against movements which had originated in the chaos of the post-war period. It may be said, with some risk of over-simplification, that Masaryk saw the principal enemy in the past and was confident of victory when confronted with protagonists of totalitarian ideologies as they appeared successively on the scene. He wished to exterminate the old spirit—he often spoke of the need of "de-Austrianization"[20] and was convinced that true democracy would be strong enough to defend itself against any danger, be it from the extreme right or the extreme left.

Animated by this belief he made a firm stand against the Bolshevik agitators in Czechoslovakia and rolled up his sleeves when the moment came to fight off the first attempt at a Communist coup in December, 1920. He rejected communism in public speeches, interviews, and articles as one of the menaces of democratic and social progress.[21] He underlined his conviction that "without individualism, without gifted and inventive individuals, without capable leaders, without geniuses, society cannot be reasonably and justly organized."[22] He won the battle. The advance of communism in Czechoslovakia was checked. The Communist influence steadily declined until communism reappeared in Czechoslovak politics in the guise of anti-fascism and was, as such, taken by the progressive group into confidence and partnership.

Masaryk was even more vigilant when Mussolini and his admirers launched an offensive campaign against democracy. He rejected the Nietzschean concept of superman as incompatible with the principles of democracy and mercilessly excoriated Nietzsche as the philosophical product of the Hohenzollern *parvenus* and of Pan-German absolutism.[23] If Masaryk had not been restricted in the expression of his opinion by his presidential function, the world would have heard from Prague sharp criticism of the two dictators, Mussolini and Hitler,

[20]See H. W. Steed's introduction to *The Making of a State*, 15.

[21]His speech to the miners at Brezove Hory, Sept. 24, 1920, together with two other statements, was translated into French and appeared in a booklet *Sur le bolchévisme* (Geneva, 1921).

[22]*Masaryk on Thought and Life: Conversations with Karel Capek*, 192.

[23]*The Making of a State*, 310.

who—each in his own vein and style—endeavoured to impersonate the Nietzschean superman. Thanks to Masaryk's determined stand, proselytizing fascism met with little response in his country. On the other hand, Hitler was more successful because he was able to appeal to his *Volksgenossen* within the Czechoslovak boundary and use them as a lever against Masaryk's democracy.

Masaryk's resignation of the presidency in December, 1935, closed a glorious chapter in Czechoslovak history. A period of troubles followed almost immediately and has not yet been terminated. The first drive against Masaryk's legacy undertaken by the Third Reich crumbled in the spring of 1945. It was followed, after a short intermission, by another offensive. This second attack was engineered by inveterate opponents of Masaryk's concept of democracy and of his effort to solve social problems by agreement and peaceful means. Some of them clashed with him as early as the winter of 1917-18, while he was in Russia endeavouring to extricate the Czechoslovak military units from the revolutionary chaos. Others adopted a hostile attitude during the republican era. They opposed his policy in the Czechoslovak parliament and waited for an opportunity to pass from passive resistance to an all-out attack. Masaryk's democracy, weakened by its temporary dismemberment and by six years of occupation, fell victim in February, 1948, to the Communist onslaught, devised in Moscow, guided by the party *élite*, and supported by opportunists of various hues as well as by fellow-travellers from among the intellectual circles.

It would serve no purpose to indulge in the hope that a simple and mechanical operation could clear the ground for a re-establishment of the democratic régime in Czechoslovakia and in the neighbouring countries. Little has been achieved in the history of mankind by the simple restoration of fallen régimes. Our eyes must be turned to the future, and the coming order can be constructed only by an organic growth out of the past traditions and contemporary processes. There is much that the present generation can learn from Masaryk, from his writings as well as from his unswerving devotion to the cause of democracy. Noble ideas, wise statesmanship, and heroic deeds do not die in people's memories even if they are temporarily obscured by adverse forces.

CRITICISM AND *CHRISTABEL*

J. Percy Smith

IT is said frequently by critics—sometimes, one suspects, in an effort to reassure themselves of their own usefulness—that poets seldom are good judges of their own works. The generalization seems to be based on the notion that the person who creates a poem, and thus knows it from the inside, as it were, cannot be expected to contemplate it clearly from the outside also.

A notable exception is Coleridge, not that he was in the habit of writing critiques of his own poems, but that the full recognition of his best poetry only followed, and to a large extent apparently depended on, the application to it of Coleridgean critical principles. The extent to which this is so, and the weakness of some un-Coleridgean approaches to criticism, is nowhere clearer than in the critical history of *Christabel*.

The publication of this poem in 1816 evoked scornful critical laughter and censorious comment that must have done immense harm to the poet's reputation at the time, and caused him genuine pain. One is moved even after so many years by the spectacle of the pontifical, though often anonymous, literary magistrates condemning the mild poet. For Coleridge's nature was not one that could rouse itself to carry on a quarrel, not from incapacity or want of courage but rather from intentness on nobler matters.

I do not mean to imply that Coleridge was beyond criticism; certainly he did not consider himself so. Nor did he object even to critical violence. "Every censure," he wrote, "every sarcasm respecting a publication which the critic, with the criticised work before him, can make good, is the critic's right. The writer is authorised to reply, but not to complain. Neither can anyone prescribe to the critic, how soft or how hard; how friendly, or how bitter; shall be the phrases which he is to select for the expression of such reprehension or ridicule."[1] But, he goes on to say, when the critic in effect begins to deal with the author instead of with the work, then he is no longer a critic, but an abominable creature. "This determination of unlicensed personality, and of permitted and legitimate censure, . . . is beyond controversy the true one: and though I would not myself exercise all the rights of the latter, yet, let but the former be excluded, I submit myself to its exercise in the hands of others, without complaint and without resentment."

[1] *Biographia Literaria*, ed. J. Shawcross (London, 1907), II, 86-7.

Unhappily, the early reviewers of Coleridge's poetry attacked Coleridge the man again and again. Hazlitt, writing one of the first reviews of *Christabel,*[2] professed to find in the phrase "mastiff bitch" evidence that Coleridge was guilty of self-love and desired to show his readers his superiority over them by shocking their feelings. The much-discussed and still undetermined writer of the article in the *Edinburgh Review* for September, 1816 continues the personal attack by accusing Coleridge of time-serving and even outright venality. The *Monthly Review,* proceeding a step further, accuses him of plagiarizing. And so on. We need not here pursue the train of backbiting and vituperation, partly because, whatever views one may hold of the relationship between the goodness of the poet and the excellence of his poetry, such abuse does not constitute poetic criticism; and partly because succeeding generations have recognized how far Coleridge was above the sins he was charged with here.

Turning to what was critical in the early reviews of *Christabel,* we find three accusations that were commonly brought against the poem: that it is obscene, that it is incomprehensible, that its versification is intolerable. Let us consider these charges.

Whether Hazlitt, as Coleridge himself suspected, was actually responsible for the rumour, one cannot say, but in some way it had been whispered about, in the years between the writing of the poem and its publication, that Coleridge intended Geraldine to turn out to be a man. Hazlitt seems to have been the first reviewer to imply in his written criticism that there was something not quite respectable in the poem. "There is something disgusting at the bottom of his subject which is but ill glossed over by a veil of Della Cruscan sentiment and fine writing."[3] Hazlitt's language is mild enough. But the charge that he makes is couched in stronger and stronger terms by other critics, until we find one of them linking Byron's *Parisina* and Coleridge's *Christabel* as "poems which sin as heinously against purity and decency as it is well possible to imagine."[4]

To the present-day reader the charge of obscenity appears fantastic. Yet the realm of sex morals is one in which the unpredictable holds sway, and consistency is least regarded. One can only reflect with wonder on an age which could condemn *Christabel* for obscenity, yet laugh with hearty approval over a parody of the poem (one of many) which begins,

[2]*Examiner,* June 2, 1816; reprinted in Hazlitt's *Works* (London, 1933), XIX, 32-5.
[3]*Ibid.,* 33.
[4]Quoted by A. H. Nethercot, *The Road to Tryermaine* (Chicago, 1939), 28.

> Nine moons have waxed, and the tenth, in its wane,
> Sees Christabel struggle in unknown pain!
> —For many moons was her eye less bright,
> For many moons was her vest more tight.[5]

and concludes with Christabel's deciding not to commit suicide but instead to forget her worries in a drunken spree.

It is unnecessary to pursue the subject. But one cannot help wishing that someone had turned on the watchdogs of purity with a question from the *Biographia Literaria*: "Why with the conception of my character did you make wilful choice of mean or ludicrous associations not furnished by me, but supplied from your own sickly and fastidious feelings?"[6]

The charge that *Christabel* is meaningless nonsense seems also to have been made first by Hazlitt, who accuses Coleridge of deliberately avoiding intelligibility. Commenting on the omission from the poem (as first published) of the line "Hideous, deformed, and pale of hue," Hazlitt says: "This line is necessary to make common sense of the [poem]. . . . For that reason Mr. Coleridge left it out."[7] The *Edinburgh Review*, again following Hazlitt, calls in that favourite phrase of the reviewers, "the profundity of Bathos." But the most vigorous statement of this kind is that of the *Monthly Review*:

> It would be truly astonishing that such rude unfashioned stuff should be tolerated, and still more that it should be praised by men of genius (witness Lord Byron and some others) were we not convinced that every principle of correct writing, as far as poetry is concerned, has been long *given up*; and that the observance, rather than the breach, of such rules is considered an incontrovertible proof of rank stupidity. It is grand, it is sublime, to be lawless; and whoever writes the wildest nonsense in the newest and quickest manner is the poet of the day.[8]

It will be observed that here a third charge is linked with the second. For the *Monthly Review* is attacking not only the subject-matter of the poem, but the versification, which Coleridge had commented on in a note prefatory to the published poem. In a paragraph preceding that from which I have just quoted, the reviewer speaks of Mr. Coleridge's constant effort "to versify the flattest prose, and to teach the human ear a new and discordant system of harmony." The same charge is made in the *Edinburgh Review*. "We say nothing," wrote the critic (saying in fact a good deal), "of the monstrous

[5]"Morgan O'Doherty," "Christabel, Part Third," in *Blackwood's*, June, 1819, 287.
[6]*Biographia Literaria*, II, 103.
[7]Hazlitt, *Works*, XIX, 34.
[8]*Monthly Review*, Jan., 1817, 22-5.

assurance of any man coming forward coolly at this time of day, and telling the readers of English poetry, whose ear has been tuned to the lays of Spenser, Milton, Dryden, and Pope, that he makes his metre 'on a new principle!' but we utterly deny the truth of the assertion, and defy him to show us *any* principle upon which his lines can be conceived to tally."[9]

It is fairly plain that in these last two charges, that *Christabel* does not make sense and that its versification is unorthodox and discordant, we may see at work the fading but still potent influence of "rationalist" principles. The influence of an age which found its greatest voice in a Samuel Johnson was not likely to vanish in a decade or two. And that age had been one in which, as Leslie Stephen has expressed it, "The quality valued above all others in philosophy, literature, and art, was clear, bright, common sense."[10] It had been one, moreover, which saw in the versification of Pope the model of correctness.

Christabel, it is true, did not mark the beginning of the romantic movement; and one might perhaps think that by 1816 the reviewers would have begun to be accustomed to the strange and the new. But it was not so. Nor need we jibe at them for continuing to bring in judgments on the basis of outmoded principles, or principles applied in an outmoded way. We may charitably say with Saintsbury that they were suffering from "Kainophobia—the horror and the misunderstanding of the unaccustomed."[11] Nevertheless one wishes that in their application of rationalistic principles they had kept in mind such statements of Dr. Johnson as that in which he warns the critic not to "debar himself from the attainment of beauties within his view by a needless fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact."[12]

One must of course take note that among the shouts of the accusers were one or two voices of sympathy. The *European Magazine,* for example, attempts a kind of defence of *Christabel.* But it is not a very vigorous or enthusiastic one. That it did not in fact reflect any actual appreciation of the poem becomes plain as we read: "This poem . . . is not heroic, neither is there anything of Dryden or of Goldsmith in its composition: little also (though what it does contain includes the *worst* parts of both) either of Scott or Southey. It is, as

[9] *Edinburgh Review,* Sept., 1816, 64.
[10] *Samuel Johnson* (New York, 1878), 170.
[11] George Saintsbury, *History of English Literary Criticism* (Edinburgh, 1911), 422.
[12] Quoted in J. E. Brown, *The Critical Opinions of Samuel Johnson* (Princeton University Press, 1926), 216.

Lord Byron says of it, 'wildly original': his lordship might have added, in some places, 'incoherently unintelligible.' "[13] The poem had in fact been praised by some of Coleridge's friends, including Byron and Scott, when it was circulating in manuscript. But their praise seems not to have found any expression in the form of a reply to the reviewers.

One cannot help regretting that Thomas Love Peacock's "Essay on Fashionable Literature," which he began in July, 1818, was not completed and published in that year. For even in that part of the essay which he finished Peacock accomplished two things that might have proved invaluable to nineteenth-century literature, and to Coleridge's reputation, had the work been printed. For one thing, he made a characteristically biting analysis of contemporary periodical literature, and in particular of periodical criticism. He pointed out the poverty and even dishonesty of much of the latter, and analysed the "standard jokes of criticism" which "have been repeated through every number of every review of the bulk of periodical criticism to the present day (and were stale in the first place), without apparently losing any portion of what Miss Edgeworth would call the raciness of their humour. . . ."[14] Peacock's second accomplishment was a warm and vigorous defence of Coleridge, especially of *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, against the attacks of the reviewers, with special attention to the *Edinburgh Review*'s article from which we have quoted. It affords, he wrote, "a complete specimen of the manner in which criticism is now conducted, and certainly nothing but the most implicit contempt for their readers, and the most absolute reliance on the prostration of public judgment before the throne of criticism, could have induced [the editors] to put forth such a tissue of ignorance, folly, and fraud." This essay was not completed and published. Peacock had his say about the *Edinburgh* and Coleridge when he reviewed Moore's *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron* in 1830; but by that time Coleridge no longer needed such support.

Only in the last years of his life did Coleridge's poetry come to be recognized for what it was, and he to be treated with that curious reverence that the world seldom accords to poets until they achieve either old age or death. In the late eighteen-twenties his genial and powerful spirit, and his torrential conversation (incomprehensible though Carlyle found the latter) continually attracted to him a group of admiring, if sometimes mystified, listeners, young and old, critical and otherwise. Among them was the youthful John Sterling, lately

[13] *European Magazine*, Nov., 1816, 47.
[14] T. L. Peacock, *Works* (London, 1934), VIII, 279.

out of Cambridge. It was Sterling who first expressed fully in print the new attitude to Coleridge.

Sterling's article in the *Athenaeum* in 1828 began: "It is common to hear everything which Mr. Coleridge has written condemned with bitterness and boldness. . . . But 'Christabel' is the only one of his writings which is ever treated with unmingled contempt; and I wish to examine with what justice this feeling has been excited." Sterling writes in the consciousness that he is espousing an unpopular cause. Wisely, he proceeds not to put his readers on the defensive, not to antagonize them, but rather first to explain their prejudice against *Christabel* and thereby dissipate it, then to describe the kind of reader for whom Coleridge wrote the poem, and something of its purpose.

> To those who care not for the mythology of demoniac terrors and wizard enchantment Mr. Coleridge did not write. He did not write for Bayles and Holbachs; nor did he write for Glanvils or Jameses: but for those who, not believing the creed of the people, not holding that which was in a great degree the substantial religion of Europe for a thousand years, yet see in these superstitions the forms under which devotion presented itself to the minds of our forefathers, the grotesque mask assumed for a period, like the veil on the face of Moses, as a covering for the glory of God. Persons who think this obsolete faith to be merely ridiculous will of course think so of "Christabel." He who perceives in them a beauty of their own, and discovers all the good to which in those ages they were necessary accompaniments, will not object to have them represented, together with all the attributes and associations which rightly belong to them, and in which genius, while it raises them from their dim cemetery, delights again to array them.

In this paragraph Sterling is in part attempting to effect a *rapprochement*, as it were, with his readers, by making of the people for whom Coleridge wrote a group from which few would wish to be excluded. Also, he begins to suggest some of the sense of ancient and mysterious things that he himself finds in the poem. He then proceeds to make a much stronger and more positive statement of the approach required for a full poetic experience of *Christabel*. I quote the statement in full because it seems to me to take an important step:

> That much of the machinery of the poem is, in the eyes of a natural philosopher or a woman of fashion, trivial or laughable, bears not upon the question. The fullest persuasion of the impossibility of every occurrence in the tale is not in the least incompatible with that kind of faith which is amply sufficient for the demands of the poet. It admits of much question, whether the mind be in the more healthy and natural state, when it is disposed to treat with scorn and ridicule whatever lies beyond

the limit of its own convictions, or when it studies with affection and interest every shape and mode of human belief, and attempts to trace out and sympathize with that germ of good and truth, which lies somewhere amid the roots of every article of popular credence. But the latter is at all events the only condition of feeling on which poetry pretends to act; and he who brings a mind bristling with demonstration or experiment to receive the impact of a creative imagination, acts as iniquitously as Laertes fighting with a sword against the foil of Hamlet.

The very first lines of "Christabel" are frequently selected as objects of ridicule. Be it remembered that they are the opening of a tale of witchery, and that, unless they are read in that good faith and singleness of heart, with which a child would listen to such a story, they are not heard with the predisposition to which alone the author addressed himself.

In the succeeding paragraphs he answers adverse criticisms which had been made of various lines and phrases—the "boarding-school-miss delicacy about the gender of the mastiff," and so on. These matters disposed of, he proceeds to point out certain excellences which he has found in the poem: the "presentation of the clearest and brightest pictures by the smallest number of words"; the dramatic skill of Geraldine's tale; the art with which the presence of loathsome and supernatural evil is suggested. All these are illustrated with abundant quotations from the poem. Finally, Sterling concludes with this paragraph:

Throughout the poem there runs and lives one especial excellence, the beauty of single lines and expressions, perfect flowers in themselves, yet interfering as little with the breadth of unity of the general effect, as the primroses and hawthorns of the valley with its sweeping perspective of light and shadow. No one, I imagine, can fail to recognize in it the original germ of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel"; but how superior is it to that spirited and brilliant tale, in the utter absence both of defect and superfluity in the diction,—in the thrilling interest and beauty of every, the slightest circumstance,—in the relation of each atom to the whole,—and in the deep reflection, which is the very atmosphere and vital air of the whole composition!

Obviously Sterling is fully conscious of the problem presented by the fact that a poem provides different experiences for different readers; and his method is not to dictate or prescribe the response to any given passage or to the poem as a whole, nor yet to assume that the response of other readers will necessarily coincide with his, but rather to try, by his comments, to assist other readers in heightening their response so that their aesthetic experience of the poem may be as rich as his. For it is with an aesthetic experience that he is concerned. He has not the slightest inclination to find a rationalistic or moralistic interpretation. At the same time, he makes evident in

his opening paragraphs (which we have quoted) his awareness of the need of bringing value judgments under rational controls.

If one is struck, as one must be, by the superiority of Sterling's criticism to earlier ones, one is struck also by the way in which the main principles embodied in it agree with those of Coleridge himself. Each main step in Sterling's essay echoes or applies some Coleridgean principle.

Consider, for example, Sterling's opening remarks, already quoted, about the "Bayles and Holbachs" for whom *Christabel* was not intended. It is a painful truth, wrote Coleridge on one occasion, that

> not only a multitude of individuals but even whole nations [are] so enslaved to the habits of their education and immediate circumstances as not to judge disinterestedly even on those subjects, the very pleasure from which consists in their disinterestedness—subjects of taste and *belles lettres.* Instead of deciding concerning their own modes and customs by any rule of reason, nothing appears natural, becoming, or beautiful but what coincides with the accidents of their education.[15]

What Sterling has done is to restate in a specific situation the principle that Coleridge here sets forth, that value judgments ought to be brought under the controls of reason, not of prejudice or cant.

Sterling's second point, as we have seen, has to do with the reader's approach to the poem. Gradually he leads up to his statement that the reader must, if he is to respond fully to the poem, approach it with a childlike "good faith and singleness of heart," with, in fact, "that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith."[16]

This passage contains, moreover, a reference to the effort of the mind, whether of the reader or the poet, to "trace out and sympathize with that germ of good and truth, which lies somewhere amid the roots of every article of popular credence." At this point Sterling comes nearest to adopting a moralistic approach. Yet even here one hears the echo of Coleridge, who said that "truth . . . ought to be the ultimate end," and who wrote of romance-writers: "The romance-writer possesses an unlimited power over situations; but he must scrupulously make his characters act in congruity with them. Let him work *physical* wonders only, and we will be content to dream with him for a while; but by the first *moral* miracle which he attempts he disgusts and awakens us."[17]

[15] *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism,* ed. T. M. Raysor (Harvard University Press, 1930), I, 221.

[16] *Biographia Literaria,* II, 6.

[17] Quoted in Ernest Bernbaum, *Guide through the Romantic Movement* (New York, 1949), 62.

In the central part of the essay, where Sterling, by comment or explanation, attempts to express his own response and to heighten that of his reader, he uses a method similar to that propounded by Coleridge and in fact used by him in, for example, his comments on the Shakespeare plays. However, it is to be observed that there is a difference, as well as a similarity, here. For Coleridge had written: "I should call that investigation fair and philosophical in which the critic announces and endeavours to establish the principles which he holds for the foundation of poetry in general, with the specification of these in their application to the different classes of poetry. Having thus prepared his canons of criticism for praise and condemnation, he would proceed to particularize the most striking passages to which he deems them applicable. . . ."[18] But whereas Coleridge does in fact have his "canons" before him, Sterling gives one the impression of making up his, or drawing them from Coleridge, as he proceeds.

Finally, in the concluding paragraph, which I have quoted, Sterling seems simply to be applying another Coleridgean principle. A legitimate poem "must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other. . . . The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself."[19]

Sterling's essay, then, follows Coleridge rather closely; and as it does so it is excellent. True, it fails in some important respects. Although, as we have seen, the author is concerned with rational controls, and his interest lies in the poem as an aesthetic experience, he does not make sufficiently clear, except at one or two points that we have mentioned, the specific nature of those controls. He may say that a passage is "imagined with the highest beauty and fitness," yet he does not show why he considers it so. He fails almost entirely to mention some of the most important characteristics of this or any poem: imagination, word-music, emotion. Although he is concerned with helping readers to build up their total response to the poem, and with this aim has discussed various small portions of it, he nevertheless has not meditated deeply upon his response to the poem as a whole, so that, while we find him speaking of its unity and beauty, we look in vain for some fuller statement of his total response. Only in one or two brief comments, notably that of the concluding sentence of the essay in which he does suggest the mood of wondering abstrac-

[18] *Biographia Literaria*, II, 85.
[19] *Ibid.*, 10.

tion in which one ends a reading of *Christabel*, does he approach such a statement.

In brief, we may say that Sterling tried to combine two critical methods, the philosophical and the aesthetic, and that he was not entirely successful in either. In the former, he failed because he was not thorough-going in his application of Coleridgean principles; in the latter, perhaps because he lacked the skill and sensitivity of a Pater. Yet the two methods are not incompatible. And had he been more thorough in his philosophical criticism he would have reached the point where he was examining the poem as an organic whole, and his response to it as such, and so have achieved a satisfactory aesthetic statement.

In spite of its shortcomings, Sterling's essay offers the best criticism of *Christabel* yet made. Most subsequent discussions come nowhere near the achievement of his; though some of them deal with matters which he fails to touch upon.

Of such matters perhaps the most important is the metre of the poem, Coleridge's note on which was, as we have seen, the subject of scornful comment. Not until 1844 was an attempt made to justify fully the metre of the poem. In that year, in his essay "An Answer to the Question, What is Poetry?" Leigh Hunt made a lengthy analysis of the metrical structure of *Christabel*, pointing out its fitness and flexibility. Though he thus praised the metre, Hunt implied that Coleridge was mistaken when he spoke of it as "constructed on a ***new*** principle," and that in fact what the poet had done was to revert to the octosyllabic line of much early English verse. In this conclusion a long succession of critics, down at least as far as Saintsbury, have followed Hunt, some of them unmistakably pleased at the opportunity of patronizing Coleridge. Indeed, Ada L. F. Snell's essay "The Metre of 'Christabel' "[20] is the first to contain, on the basis of the most careful analysis, a full vindication of the poet's claim.

> One finds many lines in four-stress verse which in the expansion and contraction of syllabic content is [*sic*] wholly delightful, beautiful for meter and thought, but one can find none varied in the particular manner and for the purpose which characterizes *Christabel*. The newness is not the rediscovery of tumbling verse, well known to Coleridge; or the reintroduction of iambic, four-stress verse, or the variation of iambic verse, but is new on the principle of adding and subtracting light syllables in order to mold rhythms in harmony with different emotional impulses. Although one can find nothing like the verse of *Christabel* before it was written, one finds much similar to it not many years after . . . and there are many examples to be found in modern poetry.

[20]Ada L. F. Snell, "The Meter of 'Christabel,' " in *The Fred Newton Scott Anniversary Papers* (University of Chicago Press, 1929), 93-115.

Ten years before Leigh Hunt's essay was written, John Wilson discussed *Christabel* at some length in a review of a new edition of Coleridge's *Poetical Works*. His review is typical of many such comments on Coleridge which appeared about the time of the poet's death. Wilson has become an admirer of the poem and evidently means, as he writes, to infect the reader with his admiration. Yet his forced, rhetorical style, his breathless way of telling the story, have little to do with the strange, still atmosphere of the poem. And the contrast becomes obvious, almost ludicrously so, as Wilson breaks from his own account into direct quotation: ". . . and all the while the two are gliding together out of the wood—across the moat—the court—the hall—from stair to stair—till they reach her chamber-door —and

> Her gentle limbs she did undress
> And lay down in her loveliness."[21]

Wilson's comments, though they express high praise of the poem, are too much of the nature of generalities to be very helpful. He does, however, consciously avoid the pitfall into which almost all later critics seem to have fallen. These persist in trying either to pin a moral to the poem or to "explain" it. Such a one is Gillman, who in his biography of Coleridge devotes some pages to *Christabel*. But, like the physician that he was, he treats the poem as a subject for diagnosis rather than for experience. In a similar way H. D. Traill, writing in 1884, felt that nothing would have been gained by the completing of the poem, since "its main idea, that the purity of a pure maiden is a charm more powerful for the protection of those dear to her than the spells of the evil one for their destruction—had been already sufficiently indicated."[22] Even the most extensive study of the poem, and one of the more recent, Nethercot's *The Road to Tryermaine*, is concerned almost solely with finding a rational explanation of the nature of Geraldine, whom Mr. Nethercot concludes to be a vampire. This is interesting and learned, but it does not come at the central matter, the experience of the poem.

Still another approach is that of J. M. Robertson, who calls *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan* the "chance brain-blooms of a season of physiological ecstasy."[23] To this comment J. L. Lowes sufficiently replied in *The Road to Xanadu*. But Robertson is not alone in his suggestion of a "medical interpretation." Other critics, including

[21] John Wilson, *Works* (Edinburgh, 1857), VII, 331.
[22] H. D. Traill, *Coleridge* (New York, 1884), 54.
[23] J. M. Robertson, *New Essays towards a Critical Method* (London, 1897), 190.

Hugh I'Anson Fausset, adopt his approach to Coleridge. Still others seem to feel that they have found an explanation of part of the poem when they have discovered a relationship between a phrase in the poetic text and an entry in, say, one of the journals of Dorothy Wordsworth. This sort of discovery, especially in the hands of a Lowes, can be helpful and stimulating; but it is too easy to become so intent on such discoveries as to overlook the poem.

Indeed, against the practice of demanding from poetry either explanation or moral Coleridge himself spoke more than once. "Poetry gives most pleasure when only generally and not perfectly understood," he wrote,[24] a saying which suggests that from him who seeks first the explanation of a poem is likely to be taken away the experience of the poem. Coleridge's reply to Mrs. Barbauld, on her comment that *The Ancient Mariner* had no moral, is famous: "I told her that in my own judgment the poem had too much; and that the only, or chief fault, if I might say so, was the obtrusion of the moral sentiment so openly on the reader as a principle or cause of action in a work of such pure imagination. . . ."[25] Like Keats, Coleridge intensely disliked "poetry that has a palpable design upon us."[26]

Our examination of the critical history of "Christabel" has shown how the just evaluation of the poem depended on the critical principles of the poet. Not that Sterling's essay, even with Miss Snell's study of the metre, constitutes a full critical treatment along Coleridgean lines; but the two together suggest what such a treatment might be. I do not imply that the critical principles of any poet would yield similar results, even with respect to his own poems. But I suggest that the application of Coleridgean principles in the criticism of a great deal of poetry would be valuable, and would go far towards supplying the wants of those who are calling for a "philosophical" or "ontological" criticism.

One answer to such calls might well come through the revival and further development—under whatever new terminology—of the critical principles of Coleridge. Certainly it is interesting to speculate on the effect on modern criticism, and much modern poetry, of a critic who would begin his consideration of a poem in the light of the four qualities "which may be deemed promises and specific symptoms of poetic power": (1) "the perfect sweetness of the versification"; (2) "the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests

[24] *Anima Poetae*, ed. E. H. Coleridge (London, 1895), 5.
[25] *Table Talk and Omniana*, ed. T. Ashe (London, 1884), 87.
[26] *Letters of John Keats*, ed. M. B. Forman (London, 1947), 96.

and circumstances of the writer himself . . . the utter *aloofness* of the poet's own feelings, from those of which he is at once the painter and the analyst"; (3) images "modified by a predominant passion; or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant; or lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit"; (4) "Depth, and Energy of Thought."[27]

From the application of these general principles, the critic might turn to the examination of specific lines and passages, with a view to discovering and expressing their particular excellences. Then he would turn to the consideration of the poem as a *whole*, having in mind Coleridge's definition of a poem, and finally thinking of it in terms of Coleridge's statement regarding the organic nature of a poem:

> The spirit of poetry, like all other living powers, must of necessity circumscribe itself by rules, were it only to unite power with beauty. It must embody in order to reveal itself; but a living body is of necessity an organized one,—and what is organization, but the connexion of parts to a whole, so that each part is at once end and means!
>
> No work of true genius dare want its appropriate form; neither indeed is there any danger of this. As it must not, so neither can it, be lawless! For it is even this that constitutes it genius—the power of acting creatively under laws of its own origination.[28]

Such an examination of the poem would bring the critic's judgment thoroughly under rational controls, at the same time enabling him to make an analysis of his aesthetic experience in reading the poem which would gain rather than lose in perceptiveness and value through being established on a philosophic basis. In short, it would fill the need of criticism for a method uniting the philosophical approach with the aesthetic, leaving explanations and interpretations to their rightful place among the footnotes.

[27] *Biographia Literaria*, chap. xv.
[28] Raysor, *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism*, I, 223.

THE GOLDSMITHS AND THEIR VILLAGES

DESMOND PACEY

IN 1825 a young Halifax official by the name of Oliver Goldsmith published a poem entitled *The Rising Village*. Goldsmith was a grandnephew of the Anglo-Irish poet of the same name, and in the preface to his poem and in the introductory lines of it he frankly expressed his desire to emulate his ancestor and to produce a sequel to his *Deserted Village*. Contemporary reviewers and subsequent critics of *The Rising Village* have all referred to this relationship between the men and their poems, but without exception they have confined themselves to vague and general comparisons. Remarks such as these are typical: "The author is indeed worthy of the relationship he bears to that great genius"[1]; the poem "is an imitation of Goldsmith's Deserted Village and is eighteenth century in manner and feeling."[2] The purpose of this article is to undertake a close comparative analysis of the two poems. To what extent is the Canadian poem an imitation of its model? The superiority of the English poem is universally admitted, but in what does its superiority consist? Was it possible for a nineteenth-century Canadian to write a poem which is "eighteenth-century in manner and feeling"? If not, how did the place and time of the Canadian poet affect his attitudes?

It may be conceded at once that the two poems are roughly parallel in structure. Each may be broken down into three broad divisions: (*a*) a contrast between things as they were and as they are; (*b*) a series of portraits of representative village persons and places; (*c*) a return to the contrast between past and present, with some thoughts of the future. Within these broad divisions, however, there are important differences of detail. The Canadian poem is (by my count—the lines are unnumbered) 132 lines longer than the English, and this difference is almost wholly accounted for by an interpolated sentimental narrative of a disastrous love affair between two young Canadian villagers, Albert and Flora. In the first and third divisions of his poem, the Canadian poet substitutes tributes to Britain for the elder Goldsmith's diatribes against luxury and materialism. And in the middle section, the younger Goldsmith adds the doctor and the merchant to the English trio of parson, teacher, and tavern-keeper—significant additions these, if we remember that

[1] *Canadian Review and Magazine* (Montreal), Feb., 1826, 305.
[2] T. G. Marquis, *English-Canadian Literature* (Toronto, 1915), 566-7.

the English Goldsmith was himself a doctor of sorts and that, as we shall see below, he hated merchants as a class.

The metre of the two poems is very similar also. Both poems are written in heroic couplets, and a superficial examination would reveal little difference in their rhythm and style. The Canadian Goldsmith had clearly mastered the mechanics of the heroic couplet, and his poem is, superficially at least, as smooth and melodious as that of his model. Why is it, then, that we feel in the English poem a tension, a nervous vigour, beside which the Canadian one seems relatively diffuse and listless?

No mere mechanical examination of the prosody of the two poems will carry us very far. In those matters by which the flexibility and deftness of the heroic couplet are most often judged, the advantage is, if anywhere, on the side of the Canadian poet. The latter makes more use of run-on lines than his English model (75 as against 24); and he also makes more use of the run-on couplet (65 as against 31). The Canadian also makes a slightly more extensive use of the off-rhyme and the reversed beat in an effort to avoid the monotony to which heroic verse is prone. There is only one metrical trick in which the English poet seems to me to surpass the Canadian, and that is in the use of occasional anapaests among the prevailing iambs.[3]

Even in the more subtle matters of poetic technique, such as assonance, alliteration, and onomatopeia, there is little to choose between the two. If the Canadian poet was, in comparison with his great-uncle, a mere amateur, he was an amateur who had acquired a considerable degree of skill in versification. In his *Autobiography* he tells us that, in the years immediately preceding the composition of *The Rising Village*, he had read widely in French, Spanish, and English poetry, and he had obviously read intelligently.

Where, then, is the difference between the styles of the poems to be found? Great poetry, I believe, must possess either wit or passion or, preferably, both. Wit and passion are found in *The Deserted Village*; they are almost entirely absent from *The Rising Village*. The lines from *The Deserted Village* which have become a virtual part of the racial memory, which are quoted by people who often have no knowledge of their source, are lines in which one or both of these qualities is present.

> Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey
> Where wealth accumulates, and men decay. . . .

[3]Professor Rhodenizer, however, holds the opposite view on this last point. See his *Handbook of Canadian Literature* (Ottawa, 1930), 161.

Here the wit is in the neatly poised antithesis of the second line, in the aptness and epigrammatic brevity of both. At the same time, the passage is an impassioned expression of Goldsmith's deep-seated conviction that the commercial revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries spelt the doom of the ancestral rural England he admired. Much the same is true of other famous lines in the poem:

> Remote from towns he ran his godly race
> Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place. . . .
>
> More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise. . . .
>
> And fools who came to scoff, remained to pray. . . .

In each of these lines, Goldsmith was giving epigrammatic expression to passionately held beliefs.

The Canadian Goldsmith, on the other hand, appears to have felt passionately about nothing: he neither hates nor loves with any of his uncle's vehemence. The latter's diatribes against luxury and the tyranny of wealth have, as we noticed above, no counterpart in *The Rising Village*. The younger Goldsmith obviously admires Britain; but his description of her virtues is so unspecific and so indiscriminate as to become merely a bit of conventional colonial nostalgia. He also admires Nova Scotia; but he does not fully understand her, as we shall see below, nor cling passionately to her.[4] In building his contrast between past and present, the Canadian Goldsmith had no villain comparable to the tyrannical over-rich landlord of *The Deserted Village* on whom to place the blame. The wilderness, the Indians, and the savage beasts one may wish to subdue, but they do not inspire the same vehement hatred as the newly rich merchant who "takes up a space that many poor supplied" and "indignant spurns the cottage from the green."

If the passion of the English poem is lacking, so to a large extent is the wit. It is the elder Goldsmith's wit which saves his poem from being a mere alternation of sentimentality and invective. The wit remains throughout as the yardstick of sanity, as proof that the poet is in contact with reality. Whenever he is in danger of attributing a fantastically Utopian quality to his memories of village life, his wit steps in to save him. In the midst of his idyllic description of the village inn, he drily comments on it as a place

[4]This impression, derived from a reading of the poem, may be confirmed by reading his *Autobiography* (ed. Rev. Wilfrid E. Myatt, Toronto, 1943). He was very disappointed when, after crossing to England in 1817, he was posted back to the Halifax commissariat station. He would have preferred to remain in England, or to have been sent to some other British possession. See pp. 6 ff.

> Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,
> And news much older than their ale went round.

The whole portrait of the schoolmaster is a triumph of this kind of irony, as exemplified in the lines:

> Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
> The love he bore to learning was in fault.
> The village all declar'd how much he knew;
> 'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too. . . .

The younger Goldsmith obviously recognized the value of this element in the English poem, and sought to emulate it. Occasionally, as in his portrait of the doctor—

> No rival here disputes his doubtful skill,
> He cures, by chance, or ends each human ill—

or of the schoolmaster—

> Whose greatest source of knowledge or of skill
> Consists in reading, and in writing ill—

he approaches the same deftness; but for the most part his efforts at wit are laborious (see, for example, his long-winded account of the insatiable curiosity of the tavern-keeper).

Another respect in which the Canadian poem falls short of the style of its model is in its relative lack of specific detail. Although both poems are idyllic in their approach to rural life, and therefore may be excused a certain generality in their descriptions, it is notable that the English poet achieves a mixture of the typical and the individual, of the general and the particular, which is beyond the skill of the Canadian. Both schoolmasters are types, but the English schoolmaster is much more of a recognizable person than his Canadian counterpart. Rural festivities in both poems are pretty generalized merrymakings, but there are skilful touches of specific detail (the "swain mistrustless of his smutted face") in the English poem which are almost totally lacking in the Canadian. Occasionally, however, the Canadian poet does use his eyes and describe things in some detail, and then his poem takes on a new authority and strength. One example of such passages is this description of the process then in vogue for clearing the land:

> See! from their heights the lofty pines descend,
> And crackling, down their pond'rous lengths extend.
> Soon from their boughs the curling flames arise,
> Mount into air, and redden all the skies. . . .

An even better example, and to my mind the best passage in the entire poem, is this description of the country store:

> Around his store, on spacious shelves arrayed,
> Behold his great and various stock in trade.
> Here, nails and blankets, side by side, are seen,
> There, horses' collars, and a large tureen;
> Buttons and tumblers, fish-hooks, spoons and knives,
> Shawls for young damsels, flannel for old wives;
> Woolcards and stockings, hats for men and boys,
> Mill-saws and fenders, silks, and children's toys. . . .

But such particularity is rare in *The Rising Village*; for the most part the author is content with such vague and general passages as this:

> As thus the village each successive year
> Presents new prospects, and extends its sphere,
> While all around its smiling charms expand,
> And rural beauties decorate the land.

This last passage has the air of being written by rote: it is a bit of padding which adds nothing to our understanding of the village. The tendency towards padding is found throughout the poem, and is largely responsible for the diffuse impression which it leaves upon the reader. Here are a few lines which illustrate this tendency:

> In search of wealth, of freedom, and of ease.
> How great the pain, the danger, and the toil. . . .
> The danger, trouble, hardship, toil and strife. . . .
> His heart seemed generous, noble, kind, and free. . . .
> Behold it, wounded, broken, crushed and riven. . . .

The Canadian Goldsmith almost invariably attaches the stock epithet to his noun: woe must be "piercing"; prospects are, of course, "boundless," "charming," or "fair"; passions, it is universally agreed, are "heedless"; a mill is always "busy," a cottage "humble," and a traveller "weary."

Of a writer so given to the use of conventional epithets we should not expect much originality in the use of metaphors and similes. This is another respect in which the Canadian poem is clearly inferior to its English model. The elder Goldsmith was himself no Donne or Shelley to startle us with the brilliance or variety of his figures, but scattered through *The Deserted Village* there are metaphors and similes which impress us by their aptness. Speaking of his desire for a quiet life of retirement, he writes:

> . . . I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
> Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
> To husband out life's taper at the close,
> And keep the flame from wasting by repose. . . .

But one searches in vain in *The Rising Village* for images to equal this and others which might be cited. The younger Goldsmith never gets beyond such stock comparisons as that of a girl to a flower or of a young man to a "captive led by love's endearing chain."

In matters of style and technique, then, the similarity between the two poems is largely an external one. The same structure and metre have been employed, but the Canadian has used them with much less skill. What of the substance of the poems?

There is first of all the question of their documentary value, of their reliability and usefulness as pictures of the contemporary social scene. There has been a great deal of debate on this aspect of *The Deserted Village* ever since its appearance. Was the kind of expulsion of which Goldsmith writes a common thing, justifying his pessimism, or was he drawing extravagant conclusions from a single isolated episode? And in any case, was not his picture of former village life unduly Utopian? On the other hand, there has been, to the best of my knowledge, no debate at all about the documentary truth of *The Rising Village*. Eagerly leaning on this final crutch available to defenders of our early literature, critic has echoed critic in declaring that, whatever its strictly literary merits, *The Rising Village* is a clear and accurate picture of the process of early settlement in Nova Scotia. It is my contention that the documentary aspect of the Canadian poem is at least as debatable as that of its English counterpart.

Recent scholars concerned with the thought of the English Goldsmith seem to have reached essential agreement on the main points raised in the previous paragraph.[5] Goldsmith did exaggerate, both in his assumption that such expulsions as he described were widespread and in his idyllic picture of an English, or Irish, village. On the first point, Howard J. Bell writes:

> What little is known about the factual background of the poem is not very helpful in explaining Goldsmith's foreboding. Certainly his friends thought he was conjuring up imaginary dangers. Puzzled by his insistence that the evils described in the poem were real, his early biographers tried to find records of deserted villages, but their searches were not rewarded

[5]See R. W. Seitz, "The Irish Background of Goldsmith's Social and Political Thought," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, LII, 1937, 405-11, and Howard J. Bell, Jr., "*The Deserted Village* and Goldsmith's Social Doctrines," *ibid.*, LIX, 1944, 747-72.

with prolific evidence. An eviction of the tenants of Lissoy, in Ireland, seemed the only excuse for the outburst. . . . Several of his contemporaries, to be sure, agreed with his presentation of the evils, though how much they really knew about such matters cannot be determined. All that anyone can say on the basis of the very slight evidence is that probably some villagers were wiped out when wealthy men bought land for their estates. (p. 767)

On the second point, the same scholar has this to say:

That the poet's description [of the village] is Utopian cannot be doubted. . . . He deliberately magnified the beauty of their simple country life in "the good old days" in order to make more poignant their sorrows and hardships. His purpose was thus to magnify (according to a rhetorical principle as old as Aristotle) the harm done and to arouse popular feeling against the wealthy tyrants and the government's policies that made their depredations possible. (p. 752)

But this exaggeration was, then, deliberate, part of Goldsmith's rhetorical design. And it was exaggeration, not falsehood. In terms of his social and political attitudes—those of an old-style Tory who clung to the traditional virtues of rural England as against the brash arrogance and display of the new oligarchy—what he had to say of conditions in the late eighteenth century was true and deeply considered. Although villagers were not being dispersed in as great numbers as he implies, and although village life had not been quite the pattern of excellence he describes, the basic process which disturbed him was at work. Under successive Whig ministries, English commercial interests had gained much ground at the expense of the landed interests, and the traditional rural way of life was indeed in danger of extinction. In a sense, Goldsmith's picture, drawn when the Industrial Revolution was in its infancy, was prophetic: it was to be drawn again a generation later by Wordsworth and by a variety of writers during the Victorian age. If, then, *The Deserted Village* is inaccurate in some of its details, it nevertheless expresses a fundamental truth regarding the development of English society in its period.

Much the same, I believe, is true of the documentary aspect of the Canadian poem. It has documentary value, but of a sort at once more general and more limited than has previously been suggested.

It is strange that critics who accept *The Rising Village* at its face value as an accurate picture of social conditions in early Nova Scotia should not have been struck by the contrast between it and Haliburton's *The Clockmaker*, published only a decade later. The contrast is quite as great as that between the English Goldsmith's village and

Crabbe's. The Canadian Goldsmith's farmers are all industrious and efficient; Haliburton's are lazy and unenterprising. For Goldsmith, all is for the best in the best of possible worlds; for Haliburton, Nova Scotia is in a slough of apathy and ignorance from which only the lash of satire may arouse her.

If we turn to contemporary histories and journals as a means of arbitrating this dispute, we find that the weight of evidence is on the side of Haliburton.[6] The picture, admittedly, is somewhat confused; but the following general outline emerges fairly clearly. During the Napoleonic and American wars, Nova Scotia had enjoyed a period of great prosperity; but once the wars were over a long period of depression set in. The severity of this depression was aggravated by the restrictions placed by Great Britain upon colonial trade. At the very time when *The Rising Village* was being written, urgent representations were being made to the Imperial authorities to have these restrictions removed; and in the year of its publication some relief was indeed afforded by Huskisson's tariff. But what reflection of all this is there in the poem? None. There we are told that from the shores of Nova Scotia

> with every gentle gale,
> Commerce expands her free and swelling sail. . . .

There is not a hint of the current dissatisfaction with Britain's trade policies; instead Goldsmith declares:

> These are thy blessings, Scotia, and for these,
> For wealth, for freedom, happiness, and ease,
> Thy grateful thanks to Britain's care are due,
> Her power protects, her smiles past hopes renew,
> Her valour guards thee, and her councils guide,
> Then, may thy parent ever be thy pride!

If Goldsmith's picture of commerce is unduly optimistic, so is his picture of agriculture. Many of the early settlers of Nova Scotia were utterly unfitted for agriculture, and despised it as an occupation;[7] during the war many farmers abandoned their farms for trading; agricultural methods were primitive in the extreme; most of the colony's flour had to be imported from the United States. It is true that by 1825 some improvement had been effected, largely through the agitation of "Agricola" (John Young) and the subsequent estab-

[6]See John M'Gregor, *British America* (London, 1832); Captain W. Moorsom, *Letters from Nova Scotia* (London, 1830); Hugh Murray, *British America* (London, 1839); Abraham Gesner, *Industrial Resources of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, 1849); *A General Description of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, 1823; new ed., 1825), published anonymously but now attributed to T. C. Haliburton.

[7]See M'Gregor, *British America*, 143.

lishment of agricultural societies. But Haliburton's *General Description of Nova Scotia,* the second edition of which was published in the same year as *The Rising Village,* records:

> Although the change produced by these societies is very great, yet it is more visible in the improved breed of cattle, in the variety and quality of the seeds, in the use of coarser grains, and in the attention paid to manure, than in the different branches of work performed upon a farm. The ploughing is still badly executed, land generally undrained, poorly fenced, insufficiently manured, and in many places so neglected as to become very foul with weeds. . . . There is still room for the introduction of further industry and economy. . . . The native farmer is too apt to speculate, to enter into trade, and dabble in small coasting vessels, to the neglect and injury of the farm.[8]

And as late as 1849, Gesner wrote:

> That the Agricultural Societies in the different counties of the Province have been in some degree beneficial to the farming interests, and especially to the improvement of the breeds of domestic animals, there can be no doubt; but not more than one farmer in ten has been induced to enrol himself. . . . True it is that the spirit of enquiry slumbers in their bosoms, and they choose to tread the old beaten track of their fathers rather than avail themselves of modern discoveries.[9]

But of these unfortunate conditions, there is again no hint in *The Rising Village.* According to Goldsmith, the Nova Scotia farmer watches

> His rising crops, with rich luxuriance crowned,
> In waving softness shed their freshness round. . . .
>
> . . . And boundless prospects stretched on every side,
> Proclaim the country's industry and pride.

In other words, *The Rising Village* is not a documentary poem in the strict sense of that phrase; it does not give us a detailed and accurate picture of social and economic conditions in its age. If this is to some extent true also of *The Deserted Village,* there is this marked difference between the two poems: the English Goldsmith was saying the uncomfortable thing, he was fulfilling one of the functions of the artist in being the conscience of his race; but the

[8]Pp. 102, 109. This book, in its first edition, may well have given Goldsmith the idea for his poem. In chapter XI, "A Brief Sketch of the State of the Province during the Administration of Sir George Prevost, Sir John Sherbrooke, the Earl of Dalhousie, and Sir James Kempt," Haliburton writes: "The origin and growth of a modern Colony affords much matter of curious speculation. To trace the difference between the state of man rising in the progress of years to civilization, and that of an enlightened people operating upon uncultivated nature, is at once an interesting and useful pursuit." He then quotes from *The Deserted Village,* and goes on to write what is in many respects the prose counterpart of *The Rising Village.*

[9]*Industrial Resources,* 208.

Canadian Goldsmith was saying the comfortable thing, saying what he knew everybody wanted to hear about the progress of the colony. There was ample scope in the Nova Scotia of the twenties for a biting satirical poem, for passages of invective similar to those in *The Deserted Village*, but Goldsmith chose to ignore his opportunity and to murmur soothingly that all was well.

But much the same defence can be offered for his departures from strict accuracy as was offered for the English Goldsmith. In the first place, the Canadian poet's rhetorical design demanded a sharp contrast between the wilderness to which the settlers had come and the relatively civilized community which they had managed to build. To have taken account of the shortcomings in the contemporary community would have weakened the force of this contrast. In the second place, for all its inaccuracy of detail, *The Rising Village* does present a truth: Nova Scotia *had* made tremendous progress in both agriculture and commerce in the half-century preceding the poem. Finally, and most important, the poem testified to a new spirit discernible in the Nova Scotia of the twenties. As various recent writers have pointed out, the colony was at this period evolving a sense of its own identity and destiny.[10] The colony had reached the stage in its development when it began to have the degree of social cohesion necessary for intellectual and artistic expression. *The Rising Village*, Howe's essays, poems, and speeches, and Haliburton's histories and satires are the literary manifestations of this new spirit. In other words, *The Rising Village* is the document not so much of an economic condition as of a state of mind.

This state of mind, however, is such as to make ridiculous the assertion that the poem is thoroughly eighteenth-century in outlook. Goldsmith may have imitated his English namesake in structure and style, but he did not imitate him in thought. Life in nineteenth-century Canada had given him an attitude which differs sharply from that expressed in *The Deserted Village*. The English Goldsmith was no believer in "progress"; he shared Swift's "negative philosophy of history," and believed that the best hope for Britain lay in a reversion to a simpler society based primarily upon the land. He was consistently opposed to the proliferation of commerce and of the Empire which supported it. Commerce, and the merchants who conducted it, were the villains not only of *The Deserted Village* but of most of his writings. As Mr. Bell puts it: "From beginning to end he despised

[10]See, for example, A. G. Bailey, "Creative Moments in the Culture of the Maritime Provinces," *Dalhousie Review*, Oct., 1949, 231-44, and G. G. Campbell, *History of Nova Scotia* (Toronto, 1948), 199.

and feared the commercial spirit. The thirst for gain, as he frequently pointed out in his essays and histories, produced avarice, fraud, debasing subservience to attain an objective, injustice, cruelty, bad faith, venality in public office, and neglect of national welfare. The merchant class would go on as they had begun in 'the rage of gain' until they ruined the nation—or were forcibly stopped."[11] When we turn to the Canadian Goldsmith, how different is the attitude! This Goldsmith is a child of the progressive nineteenth century, and of optimistic North America. To him, the pedlar who "a merchant's higher title gains" is a hero to be singled out for special praise; the wealth and splendour of Britain are her glory, not her shame; the outflung Empire is a token of Britain's progressive spirit:

> . . . Thy flag, on every sea and shore unfurled,
> Has spread thy glory, and thy thunder hurled.

Whereas the English Goldsmith, influenced probably by his reading of classical literature and history, foretold the doom of his over-rich country and ended his poem on a note of sombre warning, the Canadian poet concluded with optimistic prophecy:

> And as the sun, with gentle dawning ray,
> From night's dull bosom wakes, and leads the day,
> His course majestic keeps, till in the height
> He glows one blaze of pure exhaustless light;
> So may thy years increase, thy glories rise,
> To be the wonder of the Western skies;
> And bliss and peace encircle all thy shore,
> Till empires rise and sink, on earth, no more.

This optimism is perhaps not wholly due to the Canadian Goldsmith's time and place: it may be in part due to his youth. It was, however, almost the last as well as almost the first product of his pen. He did turn out a few occasional poems afterwards—they are collected, along with the second edition of *The Rising Village*, in a tiny grey volume published in Saint John in 1834—but none of them are of much significance. There is pathos in the paragraph in his autobiography in which he tells us why he gave up poetry:

I had better have left it alone. My unfortunate Baubling was torn to shreds. My first effort was criticized with undue severity, abused, and condemned, and why? Because I did not produce a poem like the great Oliver. Alas! Who indeed could do so? Whatever merit it possessed in itself was disowned, because the genius that wrote it did not equal that of his great predecessor. I had, however, the approbation of the "judicious few," who thought it an interesting Production. It was very

[11] *PMLA*, LIX, 165-6.

fortunate for me that it was the occupation of leisure hours. My living did not depend on my poetical talent, lucky fellow, and in this respect I had the advantage of the immortal Poet. After this essay I abandoned the Muses, and I have not had the pleasure of any further intercourse with the lovely ladies.[12]

With this in mind, it is difficult to be too severe in criticizing *The Rising Village*. Whatever its shortcomings when compared with its model, it retains its interest for us as the first poem to be published in book form by an English Canadian, and as the first literary testament of an intellectual ferment in colonial Nova Scotia. Moreover, as the *Eclectic Review* put it in its notice of the poem a century and a quarter ago, "who will grudge half a crown for a poem by a descendant of Oliver Goldsmith's?"[13]

[12]P. 12.
[13]Sept., 1825, 268.

MATERIALISM AND THE THEORY OF ORGANISM

HANS JONAS

BIOLOGY, the modern science of life, is beset by an embarrassing contradiction. Dealing with things alive, it is committed to excluding categories of life from their explanation. It is so committed because it aspires to the status of a science. To be a science, in our day, means to be a department of natural science. As such, biology treats of bodies, or rather, of a particular class of bodies whose particularity is sufficiently marked to justify separate treatment. Now, according to the general assumptions of physical science, the particularity of a class of bodies consists in the disposition of its parts, the ultimate parts or "elements" themselves being the same in all aggregates; and since the basic modes of their interaction, their "behaviour" within the aggregate, are identical in all combinations, "knowledge" of any complex entity merely results from the application of the general laws of physical interaction to the particular pattern in which the elementary units are arranged. Successful analysis, therefore, always means reduction to the elementary level where all differences, except those of number and order, vanish; and has its test in successful synthesis, i.e. in the deduction, from these prime elements, of the complex systems and their functioning which are actually found in experience.[1]

Under this general scheme, an organism is in principle no different from other physical systems, though distinguished by its degree of complexity. Its scientific treatment, therefore, i.e. biology, is ultimately governed by the cognitive standards of physics. Such at least is the abstract postulate which determines biology's method. In fact, however, biology is far from commanding that two-way passage of analysis and synthesis, of induction and deduction, which mechanical physics prescribes as the ideal. At present, analysis of living objects proceeds on selected causal lines, while the synthesis of an organic whole, its intelligible construction from the sum of its elements, is today farther from the reach of theory than is the experimental making of life by means of the techniques of the laboratory (where a felicitous chance may intervene). Thus, for example, starting from a whole organism, we may isolate the role of a particular hormone and arrive at an accurate physico-chemical account of its working within the whole whose existence is pre-

[1]Cf. the "resolutive" and "compositive" method of Galileo.

supposed; but we cannot, starting from the hormone together with all the other separable causal threads, deduce the organic whole, the subject of a single, central, indivisible life, let alone answer the question of how under mechanical laws the collocation of these factors itself can have come about. The enormous complexity of even the simplest organic system is the commonly adduced, but not the ultimate reason for this shortcoming of the "compositive" method in the biological sciences. The inventory of constituent parts, the discernment of patterns, the mastery of techniques for their mathematical handling, may increase indefinitely; it will still be the case that the kind of unity and wholeness involved in organic individuality will transcend the very meaning of the questions that physics (of the modern type) can ask. Biology is as little able to feed its primary elements—the end-terms of its analysis—into a computing machine and have it grind out the form and behaviour of an organism, as a man is unable to turn out *Paradise Lost* by feeding into the machine the twenty-six letters of the alphabet; though both the organism and the poem undoubtedly do "consist" of their respective elements and no others. What biology can do is to take the whole entity, its *Paradise Lost* (to pursue the simile), and analyse it—into what? Into its elements of meaning and aesthetic value? No: into the letters or sounds of which it consists, *together with* the grammatical and phonetic rules of their combination. Herein lies the peculiar crux of biology as the science of life. The equation between a whole and the sum of its parts which marks the success of every other physical inquiry entails here the loss of that distinctiveness which makes a living thing *qua* living something more than the sum of its parts.

II

Let us try to get at the root of this matter. The problem arises from an ontological fact quite beyond the choosing of scientific classification and methodology. It arises from the fact that life, whatever else it be, is corporeal in all respects which concern its reciprocal relations with other things—and thus forms an integral part of nature as the system of *res extensa*; while at the same time it transcends mere physical nature with the very first stirring of feeling and appetition. Now science, as understood since its foundation in the seventeenth century, cannot deal with these latter features. Indeed, it was founded on the very elimination of such features from the thought-model of its object, and with the extension of the applicability of this expurgated model, science came to embrace more and more aspects of reality. That this expansion ended by engulfing

even the original locus of those features is a paradox unforeseen by the founders of modern science, with their firm dualistic philosophy. Modern biology is the expression of that paradox. It applies a scheme which is essentially the residual of a subtraction, viz. of the zoomorphic elements in experience, to that which had contributed the subtracted elements in the first place and from which they would seem inalienable. Expatriated from their own birthplace, they are now more homeless in the scheme of science than is Ahasuerus in a world which at least lets him wander in its midst. Each experience, including the scientific undertaking itself, reaffirms the disowned traits by the very act: their claim is bought off by according them a shadowy existence in the no-man's land of "subjectivity," the convenient Hades of natural science, as if this disposed of them and left for scientific description an untainted "objectivity" which need no longer answer for them. As part of this purged objectivity, the physical phenomena of life are but a special case of the lifeless, and life is deemed known scientifically to the extent to which its reduction to non-life has succeeded.

How has this truly fantastic situation come about? The full story exceeds by far the limits of these introductory remarks. It would have to start with animism or primitive panvitalism and travel the whole road through dualism to modern materialism. The length of the road is apparent from the contrast between the two end-positions. In the beginning, life and soul were everywhere, and being was identical with being alive. Bare or "dead" matter was yet to be discovered. In these surroundings, death loomed as the great riddle. Thus it was not life but death which at first called for an explanation. The explanation had to be in terms of life as the only understandable thing; death had to be assimilated to life, by making it a transmutation of life itself. Hence the burial rites of early mankind, the cult of the dead, the pristine metaphysics rising out of the tombs. They meet the profound challenge. To save the sum of things, death had somehow to be denied.

Modern thought is placed in exactly the opposite theoretical situation. Death is the natural thing, life the problem. From the natural sciences there spread over the conception of all reality an ontology, the model entity of which is pure matter, stripped of all features of life. It is the residue of a reduction to the properties of mere extension which submit to measurement and hence to mathematics. These properties alone satisfy the requirements of what is now called exact knowledge. Indeed they, and nothing else, are that which is—by these standards—knowable in nature. In other words: the

lifeless has become the knowable *par excellence,* and is, for that reason, also considered the true and only foundation of reality. It is the "natural" as well as the original state of things. Consequently it is the existence of life within a mechanical universe which now calls for an explanation, and the explanation has to be in terms of the lifeless. Explaining life means, therefore, negating it by making it one of the possible variants of the lifeless. A negation of this kind is presented by the mechanistic theory of the organism, just as the rites of the tomb contained a negation of death. But even apart from orthodox mechanism, materialistic monism in general is left with this question: how is life reducible to that which is not life?

To recapture from scientific routine the wonderment which this state of affairs deserves, we need to remind ourselves that the corpse, in which "dead" matter primarily revealed itself, was once the limit of all understanding and therefore the first thing not to be accepted at its face value. Today the living, feeling, striving organism has taken over this role, and is being unmasked as a *ludibrium materiae*, a delusive hoax of matter. Today the corpse is the most intelligible among the states of the body. Here the organism returns from its puzzling and unorthodox behaviour of aliveness to the unambiguous, "familiar" state of a body within a world of bodies, whose general laws constitute the canon of all comprehensibility. To approximate the laws of the organic body to this canon, i.e., to efface in *this* sense the boundaries between life and death, is the aim of modern thought on life as a physical fact. Our thinking today is under the ontological dominance of death.

This replacement of vitalistic monism by materialistic monism could not have been reached without the interposition of dualism, whose rise and long ascendancy are among the most decisive events in the mental history of the race. We cannot here go into the very complex history of dualism, but we may point out that death played a potent part in its genesis and conceptual formation. Σῶμα—Σῆμα, the Body—a Tomb, had been, in Orphism, the first dualistic answer to the problem of death, or of life, which was now conceived as the problem of the interrelation of two different entities, body and soul. The body as such is the grave of the soul, and bodily death is the latter's resuscitation. Life dwells like a stranger in the flesh which by its own nature—the nature of body—is truly nothing but a corpse, seemingly alive in virtue of the soul's passing presence in it. With the growth of dualism, the features of the bewildering spectacle from which it had started—the spectacle of the corpse—spread more and more over the face of the physical universe. Death in fact conquered

external reality. At the peak of the dualistic development, in Gnosticism, the σῶμα—σῆμα simile, in its origin strictly anthropological, actually applied to the universe. The whole cosmos is σῆμα, tomb of the soul or the spirit. There, at bottom, the matter rests to this day—with the difference that the tomb has meanwhile become empty. With the critical evaporation of the hypostatized spiritual entity, of the "something" which could be thought enclosed in that grave or prison, only the walls remained, but these extremely solid. This is, metaphysically speaking, the position of modern materialism which inherited the estate of a defunct dualism, or what was left of it. In the triumph of taking possession, materialism was hardly aware that the left-over to which it succeeded carried a mortgage never to be redeemed from its own resources, viz., the task theoretically to support those phenomena which had formerly been taken care of by the vanished half of dualism's estate. This task had inescapably devolved upon materialism once it established itself, on its part-domain, as a self-sufficient monism. Its bequest was the secret revenge for one of the greatest usurpations in the history of thought. Actually, materialism can never attain to the legitimate status of monism. For it represents but one side, taken in isolation, of a dualism which had first torn asunder an original one. But materialism continues logically to presuppose transcendental dualism, metaphysically dead though it be, because otherwise it could not keep matter to itself, i.e., free from spiritual attributes that matter exhibits in the natural context of life. Only by having unavowedly in the background the other world of dualism could materialism afford to disregard it and to interpret reality as pure "matter." The final exit of dualism, in the sense of a two-substance doctrine, through the ontological abandonment of its spiritual pole, meant the end of classical materialism as well, without the materialists becoming aware of it. In other words, a true monism demands a concept of substance transcending, yet embracing, that aspect which materialism isolated under the name of matter. Thus true monism would mean the overcoming of materialism by a revision of its metaphysical presuppositions concerning matter.

III

The rise of materialism was a function of the rise of modern science. We have, therefore, to ask what made science fasten upon a certain form of dualism as the ontological setting most suitable to its purpose and, once securely entrenched in its half of dualism, made it discard the other half as redundant. The clearest answer is supplied

by reference to Descartes and the history of Cartesianism. In its briefest form, the answer to the first part of the question would run, that the new mathematical ideal of natural knowledge was best served by, and indeed required, the clear-cut division between two realms, which left science to deal with a pure *res extensa*, untainted with the non-mathematical characters of being. That reality *in toto* was not of this one, desirable kind had been realized by Galileo, whose doctrine of the mere subjectivity of the secondary qualities initiated the extrusion of the undesirable features from physical reality. But subjects themselves are objective entities within reality, and the extrusion of features remained incomplete so long as their dumping ground itself was a part of the world to be described by natural science. Now, Cartesian dualism seemed the perfect answer to this difficulty. Here was one substance whose one essential attribute is extension, whose one essential mode of cognition therefore is measurement and mathematical description; and another substance entirely separate and independent, whose one essential attribute is awareness (*cogitatio*), and about the specific mode of whose cognition and description there is far less clarity, but also far less concern. The isolation of the *res cogitans* was the most effective way of securing the complete ontological detachment of external reality from what was not extended and measurable. Thus, it provided the metaphysical justification for the all-out mechanical materialism of modern science. It is to be stressed that this justification lay in assigning the excluded non-extended, and therefore non-mechanical, characters a separate and fully acknowledged domain of their own, not in denying them reality; in other words, it lay in dualism, not in monism, and it automatically lapsed with the subsequent abandonment of the dualistic complement of materialism which, left to itself, became plain absurdity.

Yet this abandonment was inevitable because of the well-known theoretical difficulties inherent in Cartesian dualism. Its forte from the point of view of corporeal science, the mutual causal unrelatedness of the two orders of being, was also its mortal weakness. In consequence, Cartesian dualism broke up into two alternatives: and, while Berkleyan idealism and Leibnizian monadology boldly tried the side of the *res cogitans*, natural science had no option in its choice of "matter." Science, it is true, would like her choice to be understood in terms of method only: but there are those among her own proper objects which force her to face the issue of materialism on the ontological level.

These objects are living organisms, the mysterious meeting places of Descartes' two substances. Descartes nowhere proved the clarity

and fearlessness of his metaphysical grasp more than in his famous machine theory of the animal body. Animals are nothing but automata, functioning according to the laws which govern *res extensa* generally. The logic of his argument applies, against Descartes' own will, to the human body as well, for from the point of view of the body, the coexistence of an ego is purely incidental. Having thus rid body of any intrinsic reference to mind, and the science of body of any obligation to account for the phenomena of mind, Descartes and the Cartesians could in complete good conscience treat the organism as just another instance of the *res extensa*, i.e., subject it to a purely mechanical analysis.

Modern biology no longer enjoys such a good conscience. When it continues to treat the organism on the lines of purely extensional properties, as it is bound to do as a department of physical science, it does so under repudiation of a task of which it is no longer relieved by the dualistic alibi.

What is the new situation of life in the gamut of science? We have seen that to Descartes animal bodies were machines so constructed as to function in the way they do: this presupposes a constructor, viz. God, and though there is no purposiveness in their functioning itself, there was the purpose in their construction towards such functioning. In this, as in other more conspicuous respects, God was a necessary assumption in the system. Since materialism, however, was left without God and without independent mind, the whole constructive task devolved upon matter itself. The task was in fact twofold: first, matter must have produced by its own unguided and blind interplay those subtle systems we call organisms; and secondly, matter must continuously produce in certain of those systems, as a by-play of their particular organization, the phenomenon we call mind.

The first task alone would seem beyond the power of matter, considering the overwhelming odds against a mere chance production of systems having the order of complexity in question: and chance production it must be, for with the exclusion of purpose or any form of finalism from physical causality a guiding principle is no longer available. Without it, the emergence of the existing organic systems would seem no less improbable than the famous monkeys hammering out at random a work of art on their typewriters in the aeons at their disposal. Here the discovery of evolution intervened to make it possible to credit unaided matter more plausibly with the production of the living kingdom and thus to advance the materialistic monism of science by a decisive step. If living forms are descended from one an-

other and have not each arisen independently, then—except for the chance generation of the first and simplest form of life—all further shaking of the dice occurs in a confined dice-box, with select dice and circumscribed ways for them to be cast: so that the game of chance is vastly narrowed down. Also the effects of mutation accumulate within one strain, while the monkeys start at each moment anew. In addition to this self-limiting and cumulative functioning of mutation the working of natural selection on its results seemed to fill admirably the place of a directing principle vacated by teleology. Indeed it was the Darwinian theory of evolution, with this combination of chance variation and natural selection, which completed the extrusion of teleology from nature. Having become redundant even in the story of life, purpose retired wholly into subjectivity.

But this monistic solution of the first of the two problems does not bear too close inspection. According to the theory, natural selection in animal evolution operates largely, and increasingly so the higher we ascend in the evolutionary scale, through factors of the mental order. We need not go all the way to intelligence. Acuteness of sense, keenness of instinct, quickness of grasp and response, the general alertness of life, are among the endowments which decide survival and thus make the wheels of selection turn. Nay, the very urge to survive, a psychical fact in all its elementary functions (hunger, fear, aggression, lust), is itself indispensable for survival, just as it is responsible for there being a struggle for survival at all. The point is that these "subjective" or "inward" phenomena are accorded causal efficacy in the realm of material cause and effect, and that this efficacy is essential for making the evolutionist doctrine workable. But this revokes the monistic basis of the doctrine, by readmitting in the selection part that teleology which had been ejected at so heavy a cost in the variation part. For these phenomena are of a purposive nature, and with them purpose is once more slipped into the causal scheme of a natural science. This is just one illustration of the point we wish to make in this paper: that the fact of organic being, even as it wrecked Cartesian dualism on the rock of the psycho-physical problem, also spells the discomfiture of its heir, monistic materialism.

This inconsistency apart, the metaphysical importance of Darwinism lay in the attempt to credit the automatism of material nature with the generation of the branching and ascending life-forms. But by thus dispensing with the dualistic necessity for a creative principle different from the created, it drew upon lonesome matter also the full weight of a burden from which dualism had kept it free: the burden to account for the origin of mind. For the mental attributes

are among the "sports" thrown up in the mechanics of organic mutation, and this genetic doctrine implies a more fundamental view of the relation of mind and body. The general formula of materialism is that mind is a function of body, and unilaterally so. The particulars of the formula are mainly devised to suit the interests of science, viz., to retain for science the methodological benefits of the preceding dualistic division, by preserving intact the closed causality of the material realm, and at the same time to make the newly assumed role of matter in the generation of mind so peripheral for matter itself as to leave the former concept of it unimpaired. This technical purpose is served by the theory of mind as an "epiphenomenon," i.e., a by-play of particular material processes in particular material systems (brains), these systems behaving in those processes entirely in accordance with the deterministic laws of matter. Now the only relevant aspect of "epiphenomenalism" lies in its negative implications. "Epiphenomenon" denotes an effect which, unlike all other effects in nature, does not consume the energy of its cause; it is not a transformation and continuation of such energy, and therefore, again unlike all other effects, it cannot become a cause itself. It is powerless in the absolute sense, a dead end of causality, past which the traffic of cause and effect rolls as if it were not there at all. Thus the closed system of material causality is safeguarded as effectively as in Cartesian dualism against any intrusion from without, and yet mind has been made, under the stratagem of unilateral dependence, a part of that nature which cannot tolerate its interference.[2] But "epiphenomenalism" itself involves absurdities too obvious for philosophic readers to be dealt with here. We will be understood when we conclude this part of our inquiry with the statement that materialist monism, while ensuring to the *res extensa* the methodological fitness for science it had acquired in Cartesian dualism, avoids the latter's psycho-physical impasse only at the price of destroying any possible understanding of mind, nay by destroying the very idea of mind; and at the same time it adulterates the clean concept of matter by charging it with an occult faculty, viz., that of generating the "epiphenomenon."

IV

It may seem that the foregoing metaphysical considerations have led us far afield, since biology itself would claim that it need not pronounce on the psycho-physical problem at all, being concerned only with describing the material facts of organisms. And psychical

[2]We see once more how inadmissible from the materialist point of view is the causal use which the theory of natural selection makes of mental characters.

facts, it is claimed, are connected with a particular group of organisms only, and when they emerge, at a late point in the evolutionary progress, they do so as something new and additional to what organism is by itself. We intend to show in another investigation[3] that this claim cannot be maintained, that indeed categories of inwardness are required in the most elementary description of organisms as living wholes (though not in the analysis of a mere part function within the whole). Here we resume the theme of our opening remarks. If organisms are treated in biology like any other objects of physical science, we have to state more precisely what the scientific supposition as such includes in, and what it excludes from, the idea of its object.

Here we can content ourselves with a brief enumeration of well-known traits. The first is measurability, and this implies the whole Cartesian concept of reality as essentially extended. The second is uniformity of operation, and this in the mechanistic scheme means inertial uniformity whereby any dynamical result is already contained in the initial quantities, and itself is just a transitory stage in the continuance of motions whose only *modus operandi* is continuation after their original quantitative measure. This condition satisfies the requirements of calculability, i.e., accurate prediction. From this there follows, thirdly, that causes, whatever their kind and diversity, work always, as it were, from behind and never from ahead of a natural event, from something, but not towards something—in a word: causes are wholly antecedents. This time-relation is an essential aspect of efficient or mechanical causes, and is reflected in the saying that such causes are "blind." With the exclusive adoption by natural science of this concept of causality, an event is wholly explained by its past, and in no sense by its future, by what it was, not by what it is going to be. This complete shift from future to past rules teleology out as a matter of course. Teleological indifference is the logical complement to inertial uniformity.[4] Fourthly, physical phenomena are analysable into simple components, i.e., elementary units and motions, whose aimless and mutually independent interplay explains the resultant whole. Reality consists primarily of these isolated elements. The unity of the complex "whole" is a mere appearance due to the grossness of our senses or other deficiencies of knowledge, and dissolves with the progress of instrument-aided analysis. The action of the intrinsically unrelated factors in constituting a joint

[3]Cf. "Is God a Mathematician?" in the Fall issue of *Measure* (Chicago).

[4]Also final causes are not measurable and would be for this reason alone outside the scope of scientific verification.

system is such that they are indifferent to this as to any result whatsoever. Here we have another aspect of what we listed before as teleological indifference. The indifference of the cause to its future effect is matched by the indifference of the part to the simultaneous whole it helps to constitute.

This indicates the second important exclusion, after that of final causes, with which the rising science struggled to free itself from the medieval tradition. "Substantial forms," i.e., wholeness as a causative factor with respect to its constituent parts, and thus the ground of its own becoming, joined final causes in the interdiction imposed by natural science. In Newtonian physics the integral wholeness of form, on which classical and medieval ontology was based, is broken up into elementary factors for which the parallelogram of forces is the fitting graphical symbol. The presence of the future, formerly conceived as potentiality of becoming, consists now in the calculability of the operation of the forces discernible in a given configuration. And these forces are not considered as constituent of specific form but as the general and inevitable behaviour of matter left to itself. Form, no longer something original in its own right, is the current compromise between the basic actions of aggregate matter. The falling apple is not so much elevated to the rank of cosmic motion as the latter is brought down to the level of the falling apple. This establishes a new unity of the universe, but of a different complexion from the Greek one: the aristocracy of form is replaced by the democracy of matter. And it is to matter that mathematical analysis is directed in post-Renaissance physics.

The test of success in explanation (quite apart from success in technological application) seems to decide the issue between the two conflicting methods unequivocally in the modern's favour. But it is not surprising to find that with regard to the living organism the reconstruction of the whole out of its quantitatively defined elements and their type of causation, even granted the analysis to be complete, seems to fail utterly. The recombination of the analytically isolated parts will not show how and why the whole is alive, nor why it is a whole. This is not surprising because, as we have seen, the ontology of modern science which determines its method is primarily one of lifeless matter. Its leading terms reflect the features of reality minus life. Yet science is obliged to apply these terms to living things too, inasmuch as these occupy space in extended reality. Here the want of a physically legitimate concept of wholeness, as distinct from a mere configurative complex of elements, proved a major disability in grasping the essential characteristics of organism.

Today noteworthy attempts are being made by theoretical biologists to overcome this disability without stepping outside the ontological postulates of physical science. Such concepts as "system" and "hierarchy of systems," "forms and levels of organization," "strata of reality," "superimposed orders of dynamical law," are intended to supplant or supplement the "elementalistic" view of classical physics, and accordingly to qualify the exclusive claim of reductive method based on that view. Since these attempts, in so far as they come from the scientific camp, do not aim at the overthrow of the physical premises themselves, some sort of permission, as it were, is sought from physical science to accept the unity of the organism as representing an autonomous level of organization. It would then be possible to treat its dynamics, the peculiar laws of its total behaviour, as a *datum sui generis,* ultimate as far as description is concerned, and no less genuine than the dynamics of the more primitive levels of reality.

The irreducibility of "levels" thus admitted raises at once the question what relation, if not mere degree of complexity, obtains between the different strata of reality within one nature? Reducibility may be denied either on principle or on grounds of practicability. Only in the former case does the issue become a philosophical one, and will then turn on the concepts of "whole" and "form," whose rehabilitation among physical terms is aimed at without such connotations as made them unacceptable to the founders of modern science. However, since these connotations concerned precisely the *effective* aspect of "form" and "wholeness" in virtue of which they meant operative principles in the dynamics of nature, and since this aspect necessarily involves that of finalism and thus affects indeed the basic conception of causality and of matter, it may well be doubted whether, divested of these unpalatable implications, the concept of wholeness retains any precise meaning, and whether, otherwise, it is at all assimilable to the conceptual scheme of materialist science. For it must be borne in mind that analysis—what Galileo called the resolutive method—is by no means an optional method for the science of matter, but unavoidable so long as matter is conceived in terms of extension and quantity. If there is any truth in Leibniz' contention that extension *is* plurality ("repetition"), and extended objects therefore multiples, i.e. aggregates, and that being by aggregation has no reality other than that of the unities of which it consists, then cognition of any object *qua* extended must mean its resolution into the ultimate elements of quantity. In other words, the quantitative view is essentially "elementalistic." It might even be asked whether,

in the purely material context, a "higher unity" is not a contradiction in terms. Nothing can be more deeply rooted in the nature of the case than that the smallest particle—of matter or energy—serves as the ultimate term of materialist ontology, just as, conversely, the integral whole, as exhibited in form, served as an ultimate term in classical ontology. In both cases the ultimate terms provide the last resort of intelligibility and therefore of explanation. They are, therefore, not open to revision without revising the whole conception of an object as such.

No such sweeping revision, however, is contemplated in the biological attempts we have mentioned. The intention is rather to make the concept of wholeness somehow available for structural and functional description, and to that extent to escape the analytical monopoly of physics, without infringing upon the ontology of physics itself which implies a ban on teleology. This would, if the concept of wholeness were taken seriously, amount to the attempt to make an omelette without breaking the eggs. But in fact the departure from physicalism is more apparent than real.[5] The pluralism of strata and their several laws is a penultimate doctrine. Surely, it cannot be meant that nature is not one? What, then, is the connection between the strata? Connection, with respect to laws, means the logical relation of special and general: with respect to objects, the ontological relation of complex and simple. The congruence of these two meanings is at the basis of natural science. The alternative would be a relation of potential and actual, with an inward principle of unfolding to replace the quantitative principle of extraneous combination. But "entelechies" have no place in the present scheme of science, and "vitalism" is discredited as an *asylum ignorantiae*. Thus there remain for the connection of physical levels only degrees of complexity in aggregation, and this requires, even if it does not ensure the complete feasibility of, an elementalistic analysis. Indeed, the problem becomes just that of feasibility, and of possible release from the requirement. It is the limits of our capacity of analysis and synthesis that we find adduced as a reason for accepting different levels of reality.[6]

[5]It seems real enough in such declarations of principle as this: "As opposed to the mechanistic conception, we are led to a different view. The task of science is to state laws for the different strata of reality." L. von Bertalanffy, "An Outline of General System Theory," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, I, no. 2, 1950, 141. We quote from this paper by a leading theoretical biologist as it can be taken to express the point of view under discussion with particular clarity.

[6]"The properly 'vital' features . . . [result] from the interaction of an enormous number of highly complicated physico-chemical events. To grasp in detail the physico-chemical organization of even the simplest cell is far beyond our capacity. . . . If you cannot follow the enormous number of processes in intermediary metabolism, use average values such as total metabolism quotients . . ., representing the outcome of all these processes, and you may be able to state

In other words, Laplace's model conception of a divine calculator, the unit terms of whose calculation are individual particles in space and time, is still implied ideally. But it is now recorded as a conception which human science cannot hope to achieve. What to us appears as a new order of functional law, must for him be completely transparent as to the elementary processes whose physical integration it is, and no novelty would remain, nor genuine wholeness either. The conceptual status of "wholes" is thus a mainly pragmatic or economical one. Science accepts different levels of description as if they were discontinuous, with the understanding that in physical fact there must be an unbroken train of derivation from the bottom upward, with no "ingression" of really new features. Physics would still be the last word with regard to every kind of structure, if only the road were passable.

This being so, our opening remarks on the position of biology vis-à-vis physics will stand. Biology, as a department of natural science, has to treat its subject-matter as physical entities: this means, as configurations of units of matter. The particular entities are distinguished by being alive. Yet, by the standards of what "scientific" means with regard to physical entities as such, biology is bound to exclude all categories of life from its explanatory scheme. The biological interpretation of life is necessarily in terms of the lifeless.

As part of the history of life's quest to know itself, materialistic biology is thus an attempt to apprehend life by eliminating that which constitutes the possibility of the attempt itself, viz., awareness and purpose. The attempt, therefore, in disowning itself as evidence of its subject-matter, contradicts itself in the understanding achieved of its subject-matter. In eliminating itself from the account it makes the account incomplete, yet does not admit a completion that would transcend the self-sufficiency of its principle, in virtue of which the account is closed in itself. Thus the attempt not only leaves itself unaccounted for, and unintelligible by its own terms: even more, with the "epiphenomenalist" depreciation of inwardness, it invalidates itself, by denying to thought a basis of possible validity in an entity already completely determined in terms of the thoughtless.

The philosophical question thus confronts us, whether the inwardness of life can be excluded from the understanding and faithful description of organisms. If the answer is in the negative, as the results of this inquiry imply, and if dualism offers no remedy, as its history shows, it is for ontology to overcome materialism by a new and non-quantitative theory of substance.

exact laws for phenomena . . . of the organism as a whole, without the hopeless undertaking to press all individual physico-chemical processes into a gigantic formula." *Ibid.*, 140-1.

THEOPHILE GAUTIER AND THE CONCEPTION OF DECADENCE

A. E. Carter

LIKE all authors who write too much and too long, Théophile Gautier survives in fragments. Two novels (*Mademoiselle de Maupin* and *Le Capitaine Fracasse*), half a dozen short stories, a few pages of the "2000 feuilletons," a phrase or two, usually quoted out of context ("J'ai toujours préféré la statue à la femme et le marbre à la chair"; "Je suis un homme des temps homériques"), and some poems of a Parnassian character ("Symphonie en blanc majeur"; "L'Art") which every student of nineteenth-century literature is expected to read: this is about all; and, considering the mass of print Gautier produced in nearly half a century of labour, it is not much. Of course his modest glory is secure: as a forerunner of the Parnassian school he will always have a place in the anthologies. Yet if there is little else in his work that deserves attention as literature, there is much that merits study as influence. For Gautier's influence was immense, and not only on the Parnassians. He had more to do than any other single writer with the formation of what is known as the *fin de siècle* or Decadent school of the eighties and nineties. In this role, he is much more important than as the poetaster of *Emaux et camées*.[1]

Everyone has read his famous essay on Baudelaire, written for the 1868 edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*, and Havelock Ellis long ago, in the essay on Huysmans in *The New Spirit*, recognized its importance as a definition of decadence. Yet for some reason (perhaps because we persist in seeing Gautier as a neo-pagan Parnassian and nothing else) it is usually considered a piece of *bravura*, a homage rendered by "le bon Théo" to a comrade of his youth, a sympathetic effort to understand the eccentricities of a poet with whom he had little in common. On the contrary, this *Notice* is in many ways a final statement of theories which had preoccupied Gautier for nearly forty years; its ideas and a great deal of its phraseology exist in his poems, novels, and critical articles from 1830 on. The hatred of nineteenth-century democracy and its theories of progress and utility, the cult

[1]Mario Praz has discussed Gautier's contributions to decadent eroticism in *La Carne, la morte e il diavolo nella letteratura romantica* (Firenze, Sansoni, 1930; new ed., 1948). But since the purpose of his study was, as he says himself (p. xi), to discuss *la sensibilità erotica*, he does not mention the other ways in which Gautier was a precursor of the Decadent movement. A brief note (p. 192) calls attention to the similarity between Fortunio and Des Esseintes.

of artificiality, the decadent hero, the *femme fatale*, the taste for the abnormal and the diseased: all these themes which he attributes to Baudelaire are to be found in the disparate volumes of his own works and the scattered pages of his *feuilletons*.

I

The central idea in Gautier's work is his cult of art—*l'Art pour l'Art*. It is the source of a paradoxical aesthetic state which later distinguishes all the Decadents. He hated nineteenth-century civilization because it was bourgeois and utilitarian and progressive, lacking both colour and *panache*, with none of the mystic glamour of the absolute monarchy and the absolute church; and he liked it because it was artificial, offering the artist new and curious forms of expression. Like a good Romantic, he thought contemporary Paris hideous, with its gas-light, smoke, mud, stench of chemicals ("atmosphère de gaz hydrogène" as he called it in *Fortunio*); and he found its theory, the theory of nineteenth-century democracy, as distasteful as its practice. He even approved of Charles X for suppressing the liberty of the press.[2] When all allowance is made for his love of paradox, this *boutade* is still significant, especially when we compare it with the anti-democratic professions of later writers such as Baudelaire and Huysmans. Yet while his love of beauty led him to dislike the unglamorous squalor of the present, it also made him appreciate the power nineteenth-century science gave man over nature.

The cult of *l'Art pour l'Art* is obviously artificial; from preferring the work of art to the work of nature it is only a step to preferring the artificial to the natural. Gautier took this step. As early as 1833, in his preface to *Les Jeunes-France*, he wrote that he preferred the city to the country. ". . . je suis un Parisien complet. . . . Les arbres des Tuileries et des boulevards sont mes forêts; la Seine mon Océan. . . . Je ne trouve pas le soleil de beaucoup supérieur au gaz. . . . Je déteste la campagne: toujours des arbres, de la terre, du gazon! . . . c'est ennuyeux à crever."[3] The idea is pushed to its extreme in *Fortunio*, whose hero later flourishes as Huysmans' Duc des Esseintes. He buys a block of houses in Paris, leaves the façades untouched, and rebuilds the interior into a palace. The central courtyard is glassed over and

[2] *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (Paris, Fasquelle, 1927), Préface, 34-5: "En ordonnant la suppression des journaux, il rendait un grand service aux arts et à la civilisation. . . . Ces aboiements perpétuels . . . jettent une telle méfiance dans les cœurs et dans les esprits, que l'on n'ose se fier ni à un poète ni à un gouvernement; ce qui fait que la royauté et la poésie, ces deux plus grandes choses du monde, deviennent impossibles, au grand malheur des peuples. . . ."

[3] *Les Jeunes-France* (Paris, Charpentier, 1885), viii-ix.

has a swimming-pool of scented water and a garden of tropical plants and birds. Since the sky is glass, rain is provided by a sprinkler system whenever the master wants a change of weather; and views are supplied by dioramas representing various exotic landscapes: the bay of Naples, the Swiss Alps, the Orient, etc. Nature is ignored, supplanted by the artificial, a proceeding made possible by the nineteenth-century industrialism Gautier pretended to despise. In 1848 he even advised artists and writers to seek material and inspiration in modern civilization rather than in the conceptions of the past. "Il est bien entendu que nous acceptons la civilisation telle qu'elle est, avec ses chemins de fer . . . ses machines, ses tuyaux de cheminée. . . . Le monde antique peut être balancé par un monde nouveau tout resplendissant d'acier et de gaz, aussi beau dans son activité que l'autre dans sa rêverie sereine."[4] It is clear from this that when Gautier praised Baudelaire for writing such a poem as "Rêve parisien" he was not sacrificing his own aesthetic convictions to the claims of friendship.

II

This cult of artificiality is common to most of Gautier's heroes, and is the source of a new type, the decadent, who replaces the fatal man of Romanticism. While the evolution from one type to the other is easy enough to trace, there are wide differences between the two. The decadent has none of the demonic energy of the fatal man (Lara, Hernani, Antony); he takes a deliberate satisfaction in having passed beyond revolt, in having reached a state of acceptance. He finds a morbid joy in contemplating the sterility of his soul, and a sick, day-dreamy pleasure in the knowledge of his spiritual impotence. He avoids life. His passion for art is a passion for the artificial, for a fictitious world in which the hand and thought of man have corrected the irregularities of the natural. "Je comprends parfaitement une statue," says D'Albert in *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, "je ne comprends pas un homme; où la vie commence, je m'arrête et recule effrayé comme si j'avais vu la tête de Méduse."[5] The decadent has not only Romanticism's contempt for the bourgeois and the *utile*, but a denial of all social and moral responsibility. And he is fascinated by disease—not the dramatic ailments of Romanticism, such as tuberculosis, but the subtle complications of neurosis. Hence a taste for the bizarre: strange sins, strange books, strange historical epochs.

[4]"Plastique de la civilisation," written for *l'Evénement*, Aug. 8, 1848, reprinted in *Souvenirs de théatre, d'art et de critique* (Paris, Charpentier), 203.
[5]*Maupin*, 272.

There is something of this in Romanticism; but on the whole, Romantic passion is fairly normal, if a trifle feverish. The decadent seeks above all a *frisson nouveau*, and deliberately searches for the corrupt.

Gautier never developed this character fully, as a character. But it fascinated him. He had affinities with it; and he has given it to us in theory, beginning with his *Poésies* in 1830. He describes himself in the Preface as *frileux* and *maladif*, two favourite adjectives of the Decadence; he says that he never goes outside his rooms and that he is entirely indifferent to the political events of the age. Tiburce, in *La Toison d'or* (1837) lives on a sopha, supported by cushions, and ignores the world around him: the overheated boudoirs of the decadents are already visible. The decadent's soul, as revealed in the *Poésies*, hides no "fatal" secrets; it is dead or precociously exhausted, and ravaged by ennui. In "Melancholia" he accepts his sterility and his powerlessness, and recognizes that he is the manifestation of a decadent age. There is not a "morbid" idea in *Les Fleurs du mal* which Baudelaire could not have found in such poems of Gautier's as "Ténèbres," "Thébaide," "Le Trou du serpent," "Tristesse," "In Deserto," *Albertus*, etc.; and the frequent echoes of such pieces in *Les Fleurs du mal*, which Blin and Crépet have noted,[6] prove that in dedicating the volume to Gautier he was not making an empty gesture.

D'Albert especially is a decadent. Besides preferring art to nature, he is fascinated by corruption. In his letters to his friend Silvio he explains his state of depravity. He was brought up in a respectable and ancient family. But "dans cette atmosphère de pureté et de repos . . . je me pourrissais petit à petit. . . . Je ne suis pas de ma famille; je ne suis pas une branche de ce noble tronc, mais un champignon vénéneux poussé par quelque lourde nuit d'orage."[7] He has "veines glacées" and "un vieux sang de vipère" which stagnates in his body; and, further and very characteristic manifestation of decadence, he has reached a desire for enormities: "Je verrais de sang-froid les scènes les plus atroces, et il y a dans les souffrances et dans les malheurs de l'humanité quelque chose qui ne me déplaît pas."[8] This is part of that craving for the impossible which D'Albert

[6]Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du mal*, ed. by J. Crépet et G. Blin (Paris, Corti, 1950).

[7]*Maupin*, 157.

[8]*Ibid.*, 197. The sadistic tone of this passage is characteristic of much of *Maupin*. Gautier's connection with the Marquis de Sade was noted fairly early by Horace de Viel Castel in his *Mémoires*, which cover the years 1851-64. The relevant passage is quoted by Praz, *La Carne*, 143.

himself recognizes as the distinguishing mark of decadence: "L'impossible m'a toujours plu. . . ." "Je suis attaqué de cette maladie qui prend aux peuples et aux hommes puissants dans leur vieillesse: —l'impossible."[9] Hence his admiration for such historical characters as Tiberius, Nero, Heliogabalus, Cleopatra, etc. He admires them for their unbridled lusts, for their cult of the impossible: their orgies were "furieux élans de la volupté inassouvie, se ruant à l'impossible avec toute l'ardeur de sens que le long jeûne chrétien n'a pas encore matés."[10] A new kind of exoticism appears in such passages as these, the exoticism of corruption. The Romantics sought distant lands and epochs because they were more glamorous, or more poetic, or more intense. D'Albert seeks them because they are more depraved. There is a *parti pris* in favour of the vicious in his fantasies, a deliberate search for historical decadence.

Alongside this decadent hero, languid and neurotic, stands the dynamic *femme fatale*. She takes three forms in Gautier's imagination: in her legendary manifestation, she is a witch (Véronique in *Albertus*, Clarimonde in *La Morte amoureuse*); in historical guise, some female famous for blood-thirsty debauchery (Cleopatra in *Une Nuit de Cléopâtre*); in modern dress, a courtesan (Musidora in *Fortunio*, Amine de Beauvilliers in *Les Roués innocents*). All three metamorphoses have certain traits in common: she is physically beautiful but morally depraved, and dangerous to those who love her. She takes over the main characteristics of Romanticism's fatal man. Like most of the other erotic manifestations of decadence, the *femme fatale* has been very fully treated by Mario Praz. It is curious, however, that he confines himself to her legendary or historical aspects. For of the three manifestations, the modern is the most interesting from the standpoint of later literature. Like her legendary sisters, she is cold to all passion, incapable of love, a female Satan: "un ange doublé d'un démon" with "un cœur d'acier dans une poitrine de marbre."[11] Her coldness and the atmosphere of corruption in which she lives explain the charm she exercises over her lovers. But she is more decadent than the other fatal women, inasmuch as, being modern, she is able to utilize certain decadent advantages which they do not possess. She is a manifestation of the great city, itself artificial and therefore decadent; and she uses all its artificial resources to enhance her charm: cosmetics, hair-dye, perfumes, beautiful clothes, etc. The *femme fatale*, after 1850, is invariably well

[9] *Maupin*, 153-4.
[10] *Une Nuit de Cléopâtre*; in *Œuvres de Théophile Gautier: Nouvelles* (Paris, Lemerre), 494-5.
[11] *Fortunio* (Paris, Garnier), 5.

dressed, highly painted, and well provided with jewels. In this modern guise she has some resemblance to Madame de Merteuil. There are interesting echoes of Laclos in Gautier: Clarimonde's desire to take her priest-lover from his God recalls Valmont's determination to do the same to Madame de Tourvel; D'Albert speaks, like Madame de Merteuil, with contempt of women who are only "machines à plaisir." Musidora and Amine are both intellectual rather than sensual characters, seeking, like Madame de Merteuil, satisfaction for their pride rather than for their senses—a prejudice characteristic of the whole eighteenth-century school of libertinage. And the fatal woman is definitely equated with Madame de Merteuil in the essay on Baudelaire.[12]

Quite apart from their intrinsic interest, these opposed types of the decadent hero and the fatal woman have another importance: they represent a sexual confusion characteristic of the Decadence. The decadent hero is languid, receptive, effeminate; the fatal woman is dynamic and masculine. They are part of that atmosphere of sexual ambiguity which lies over Gautier's work and over the work of many of his successors. Nearly all his heroes are androgynous. He compares them to Antinous, Hyacinth, Dionysus ("le dieu efféminé"), to the Indian Bacchus, which he considered equal to the Venus de Milo in beauty. His interest in the theme was so strong that he even saw his friends in similar distortion. Baudelaire's neck was white and smooth as a woman's; Celestin Nanteuil "gardait ce sexe indécis des êtres surnaturels composés de l'éphèbe et de la jeune fille"[13]; the singer Fanny Elssler is described twice, and each time she is compared to the Hermaphrodite of the Louvre.[14] That famous statue even inspired a poem in *Emaux et camées* ("Contralto"): and significantly enough the piece was written in honour of Gautier's mistress, Ernesta Grisi.[15] In *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, this vague aestheticism flowers into open homosexuality. The novel turns on a transvesticist theme and abounds in *louche* situations: disguised as a man, Madelaine de Maupin attracts the love of both D'Albert and his mistress Rosette. D'Albert at first is horrified by what he supposes to be a depraved passion; and the situation would be amusing, a quidproquo of the *Charlie's Aunt* order, if he did not proceed to justify his passion with references to Graeco-Roman antiquity. His

[12]Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du mal, précédées d'une Notice par Théophile Gautier* (Paris, Calmann-Lévy), xxxiv. Referred to here as *Notice*.

[13]*Histoire du romantisme* (Paris, Flammarion), 47.

[14]*Souvenirs de théâtre, d'art et de critique*, 53, 130.

[15]According to Adolphe Boschot's note on "Contralto"; see *Emaux et camées* (Paris, Garnier), 326.

main argument, like the main argument in favour of the artificial, is drawn from his cult of art. Provided the passion for outward perfection is satisfied, moral considerations are of no importance: "Comme on ne cherche que la satisfaction de l'œil, le poli de la forme et la pureté du linéament, on les accepte partout où on les rencontre."[16] The famous phrase "Je suis un homme des temps homériques" which is usually taken as an example of Gautier's love for Greek art, is really, in its context, D'Albert's final confession that beauty is superior to morality. He is saved from the logical conclusion of these precepts when Mlle. de Maupin consents to remove, if only temporarily, her masculine attire. But the conclusion of Rosette's idyll is very different, however discreetly veiled.[17] *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, as Mario Praz has pointed out, expressed Gautier's own tastes and was a prime source of that sexual ambiguity, at once epicene and libidinous, which characterizes the *fin de siècle*.[18]

III

Gautier's definition of decadence in the *Notice* on Baudelaire is based on all the themes thus far discussed. The decadent hero, Fortunio or D'Albert, bored and neurotic, seeks the abnormal, the vicious, the *faisandé*. He dislikes nineteenth-century industrialism, but it gives man the means of defying nature and is thus a source of new and strange pleasures, and the century is old—the result of long evolution. This idea of the extreme age of the nineteenth century returns several times in Gautier's work (in the preface to *Maupin* (1838), the preface to *Les Grotesques* (1844), and in the *Notice*), and always with the same corollary: that age implies decadence and seeks amusement for its jaded appetites in the artificial and the bizarre. The decadent style is "l'idiome nécessaire et fatal des peuples et des civilisations où la vie factice a remplacé la vie naturelle."[19] The decadent is keenly aware of belonging to an aging civilization: he considers that this fact explains his taste for corruption, his longing for new and forbidden pleasures (the newer, the more forbidden the better); it excuses his perversities. Hence his reaction against the normal, the natural; such revolt makes him superior to the rest of creation: "La *dépravation*, c'est-à-dire l'écart du type normal, est impossible

[16] *Maupin*, 223.
[17] *Ibid.*, 417.
[18] "*Mlle. de Maupin* è responsabile . . . della voga per l'Androgino che assumerà proporzioni allarmanti solo nella seconda parte del secolo. Nel buon Théo l'eventuale accenno a motivi cruenti non era che posa, ma non era posa l'attrazione pel fascino equivoco di Lesbo." Praz, *La Carne*, 184.
[19] *Notice*, xvi.

à la bête, fatalement conduite par l'instinct immuable."[20] Logically, therefore, besides cultivating his own depravity, he will seek epochs which are also decadent and depraved, which correspond to the nineteenth century: Imperial Rome, Byzantium, the Borgian Renaissance, the reign of Louis XV. D'Albert shows this characteristic, and Gautier gives him theoretic justification in the *Notice*. The decadent loves the art, the literature, and especially the vices of such ages. In the *Notice* we find the beginnings of that interest in decadent Latin authors which later flourishes in books like Huysmans' *A Rebours* and Rémy de Gourmont's *Le Latin mystique*. The names of Apuleius, Petronius, Tertullian (as a stylist) are heard again; the way is opened for a renewal of interest in the art and literature of the Byzantine Empire. Above all, there is the cult of the city. In some ways this cult of Paris is the central idea of the Decadence. By its contrast with the crudity of nature, the metropolis provides the decadent with an ideal environment; and the fatal woman, as we have already noted, finds there all manner of artifices with which to increase her beauty. Its refinements enable man to defy nature and to live in an artificial paradise—to lead, in short, a completely abnormal existence, if we accept nature as the norm. Added to all these advantages is one which specially attracts the decadent: the great city is corrupt. Paris is "le terreau noir et saturé de pourriture comme un sol de cimetière des civilisations décrépites, où se dissolvent parmi les miasmes méphitiques, les cadavres des siècles précédents."[21]

The *Notice* elaborates the phenomena of decadence into something approaching a literary doctrine. It has some claims to being the *Ars poetica* of the Decadent school. Gautier supplies not only the theory, but the vocabulary. His essay, like the Decadent style it defines ("style ingénieux, compliqué, savant, plein de nuances et de recherches, reculant toujours les bornes de la langue, empruntant à tous les vocabulaires techniques, prenant des couleurs à toutes les palettes, des notes à tous les claviers"[22]), abounds in extraordinary terms, drawn from medicine, cosmetics, chemistry, etc.: *verdeurs de la décomposition, insomnie, impuissance, malaises, prostrations, excitations, jaunes fielleux de bile extravasé, roses de la phthisie, blancs de chlorose, rouge, moches, k'hol, cheveux teints, poudre de riz, fard, céruse, burgau, gris plombé, arséniate de cuivre, bitumes, déliquescence.* About 1880 this vocabulary becomes as characteristic of Decadent literature as the *appas, trépas, courroux,* etc. of Neo-Classicism; and the subjects which this Decadent style is supposed to treat—"les confidences subtiles de la névrose, les aveux de la passion vieillissante

[20] *Ibid.*, xxvi. [21] *Ibid.*, xx. [22] *Ibid.*, xvi.

qui se déprave, les hallucinations bizarres de l'idée fixe tournant à la folie"[23]—supply the theme of more than one novel like *A Rebours* or *Le Jardin des supplices*. The parallels in thought and style between the *Notice* and *A Rebours* are frequently very striking. Here are a few:

GAUTIER: La langue marbrée déjà des verdeurs de la décomposition et faisandée du bas-empire romain. . . .

HUYSMANS: La langue paienne, décomposée comme une venaison . . . le style blet et déjà verdi des historiens . . . cette langue tacheté et superbe. . . .

GAUTIER: Ce style de décadence est le dernier mot du Verbe sommé de tout exprimer et poussé à l'extrême outrance.

HUYSMANS: La décadence d'une littérature . . . pressée de tout exprimer à son déclin, acharnée à vouloir réparer toutes les omissions. . . .

GAUTIER: . . . il y a des mots . . . qui luisent comme du phosphore quand on les frotte.

HUYSMANS: Marius Victor, dont le ténébreux traité . . . s'éclaire . . . de vers luisants comme du phosphore.

The writers of the time found inspiration in the *Notice*, which benefited also from the growing prestige of Baudelaire. The essay was even responsible, to a large extent, for Baudelaire's reputation as a decadent poet: until 1917, when the copyright of the *Fleurs du mal* became public property, there was only one popular edition of Baudelaire (the Calmann-Lévy) and it contained the *Notice*; in short, Gautier introduced Baudelaire to his readers for half a century. Critics like Brunetière, anxious to find arms against *Les Fleurs du mal*, found them in this essay, and quoted it at length in all their attacks on Baudelaire; new writers discovered an armoury of paradoxes and ideas with which to *épater le bourgeois*. "On se souvient," wrote Gustave Kahn in 1902, discussing the literature of the century's end, "de l'admirable étude de Théophile Gautier qui précède l'édition des *Fleurs du mal* et où Gautier développe la beauté particulière et chatoyante du style aux époques de décadence. Ce sont des lignes qui ne tombèrent pas dans les oreilles sourdes, et . . . on arriva à l'appliquer à notre époque . . . l'Empire, le Bas-Empire, Paris, Byzance."[24]

IV

All this decadence, of course, is simply orthodox Rousseauism turned inside out. The artificial life of the city leads to corruption, weakness, degeneracy: *fortissimi sunt Belgae*, because they are furthest from civilization. On this point Gautier, and the later Decadents, are

[23] *Ibid.* [24] Gustave Kahn, *Symbolistes et décadents* (Paris, 1902), 34.

in agreement with Jean-Jacques. The difference is in practice, not theory. Decadence may be morally or materially reprehensible, but it is the tone of the age; it is material for art; it has its own beauty as legitimate as classical beauty. The literary epoch owes Gautier its three main ideas: that the nineteenth century was decadent, at a stage corresponding to the last centuries of Rome; that artificiality and abnormality were the main symptoms of this decadence; and that such decadence was a suitable subject for literature. All three ideas evolve logically from the art for art's sake doctrine as Gautier understood it: preference for the work of art over the work of nature and hence for the artificial over the natural and indifference to moral considerations provided that aesthetic considerations were satisfied.

It goes without saying that this decadent side of Gautier's work, however marked, is only one side. In other ways he is profoundly un-decadent. The *jeune poète maladif*, who spent his days indoors analysing the sterility of his soul, became the athlete who excelled in physical culture and was proud of his strength. His cult of Greek beauty, though it led him to what is tantamount to an apology for homosexual love, also produced a robust passion for physical perfection which is the very antithesis of the nervous and the epicene. Most striking of all, he has none of the sickly, half-blasphemous religiosity which distinguishes later writers. He sometimes lamented the decay of Christianity (in poems like "Melancholia"), but this was the same sort of regret that Musset expressed in *Rolla*—a commonplace of Romantic literature. It never led Gautier to spice debauchery with sacrilege. He was rather the theorist of decadence than its practitioner. Nowhere in his work do we find the idea carried to quite its logical extreme. Alongside the *maladif* poems of the first volumes are others which express sentiments entirely opposed.[25] None of his fatal women succeeds in becoming really fatal: Cleopatra is on the point of stopping Meiamoun from drinking the poison which is to pay for his night with her; Clarimonde and Musidora actually fall in love with their victims; Clarimonde prefers to die rather than kill her lover by drinking his blood; and Musidora is represented as "régénérée par l'amour." As for the decadent hero, his ending is equally flat. After reading the lurid pages in which D'Albert's corruption is described, the reader expects deeds worthy of the Marquis de Sade. Instead, the novel ends with a mere *passade*, and an ecstatic description of Mlle. de Maupin's beauty; had she been content to

[25]For example, "Sonnet V":

> Car le bonheur est fait de trois choses sur terre,
> Qui sont:—Un beau soleil, une femme, un cheval.

remain a woman, D'Albert's happiness would have been complete. The very tone is not decadent; there is a fairy-tale atmosphere about the book which has nothing in common with the rank, patchouli-scented air and the yellow boudoirs of the *fin de siècle.*

The fact remains, however, that there are few ideas in the conception of decadence, as the late nineteenth century understood the term, which do not exist in Gautier. M. E. Drougard suggested, on the evidence of *Fortunio,* that Baudelaire and Huysmans acquired their taste for the artificial from Gautier.[26] It was possible for them to acquire much more than that, and from others of Gautier's books besides *Fortunio.*

[26]M. E. Drougard, *Mercure de France,* Oct. 1, 1931, 211.

EZRA IN DUBLIN

FRANCIS J. THOMPSON

IF Ezra Pound had escaped to Dublin in 1943, the Irish might have welcomed him like a new Christy Mahon. Or they might have remembered that Yeats, Joyce, and even, perhaps, George Bernard Shaw were much obliged to him.

Richard Ellmann says that when Pound first met Yeats in London in 1908 he was "persuaded that Yeats was the best poet writing in English."[1] On February 11, 1911, Yeats's father wrote him that Pound, who seems to have been in New York, had visited an artist friend "a few days ago and talked a lot about you, quoting quantities of your verse, which he had by heart, placing you very high, and as the best poet for the last century and more."[2]

Ellmann goes so far as to suggest that Pound caused Yeats profoundly to alter his manner; according to Pound a poet must be "clear and precise; he must eliminate all abstractions and all words which sense did not justify as well as sound."[3] Perhaps he encouraged these tendencies; he did not start them. John O'Leary, who died in 1907, had been quite as strict.[4] It is more likely that Yeats took Ezra as an apprentice. Ellmann says: "In 1912 he impudently altered without permission some poems which Yeats had given him to send to *Poetry* magazine; Yeats was infuriated but then forgave him. During the winters of 1913-14, 1914-15, and 1915-16, Pound acted as Yeats's secretary at a small cottage in Ashdown Forest in Sussex, reading to him, writing from his dictation, and discussing everything. . . . *At the Hawk's Well,* his first play in six years . . . he dictated to Pound early in 1916."[5]

But at this time Pound was "the literary executor of Ernest Fenollosa, a scholar who had spent many years" studying Sino-Japanese art,[6] and Yeats edited *Certain Noble Plays of Japan: From the Manuscripts of Ernest Fenollosa, Chosen and Finished by Ezra Pound* (1916). I suspect he also may have persuaded Macmillan to bring out in the same year *'Noh' or Accomplishment: A Study of the*

[1]Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (New York, 1948), 211.
[2]*J. B. Yeats, Letters to His Son, W. B. Yeats, and Others* (New York, 1946), 133.
[3]Ellmann, *Yeats,* 211.
[4]*The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats* (New York, 1938), 183; cf. 85.
[5]Ellmann, *Yeats,* 212.
[6]*Ibid.,* 213.

Classical Stage of Japan by Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound. For Yeats was profoundly stirred by these two books. In fact, it would seem that he got a new form of the drama from Pound.[7] Yeats began his introduction to *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*: "In the series of books I edit for my sister I confine myself to those that have I believe some special value to Ireland, now or in the future. I have asked Mr. Pound for these beautiful plays because I think they will help me to explain a certain possibility of the Irish dramatic movement." Yeats ends with the observation that although he is pleased to think that he is working for his own country he anticipates that his new plays will spread beyond Ireland "if they be sea-worthy." "Are not the fairy stories of Oscar Wilde . . . very popular in Arabia?"[8]

In between this exordium and peroration, Yeats outlined how his new dance drama would affect producer, author, and actor. His insistence on its value to the producer tells us indirectly about some of the problems Yeats himself faced at the Abbey; they were mostly economic. Again and again, in this introduction and in later ones, he tells us that these plays are inexpensive, that there is no need of extravagant scenery or a costly theatre building. The plays are designed for an intimate audience; they can be produced in a drawing-room. The musicians, or chorus, tell all that needs to be known about the scenery, as in the song for the unfolding of the curtain in *At the Hawk's Well*:

> I call to the eye of the mind
> A well long choked up and dry
> And boughs long stripped by the wind,
> And I call to the mind's eye
> Pallor of an ivory face,
> Its lofty dissolute air,
> A man climbing up to a place
> The salt sea wind has swept bare.

From the outset every word must be heard by the audience if it is to understand the subsequent action. Author has replaced producer. Spectacle has been subordinated to diction, Gordon Craig to Yeats. The author should incorporate descriptive passages about the scenery in the lines of the play itself. Yeats, following Pound's description of the practice in the Noh plays,[9] limits these descriptive passages to

[7] *The Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907-1941* (New York, 1950), 72.

[8] *Certain Noble Plays of Japan: From the Manuscripts of Ernest Fenollosa, Chosen and Finished by Ezra Pound. Printed and Published by Elizabeth Corbet Yeats at the Cuala Press, Churchtown, Dundrum, in the County of Dublin, Ireland. Finished on the Twentieth Day of July, in the Year of the Sinn Fein Rising, Nineteen Hundred and Sixteen,* xix.

[9] *Certain Noble Plays of Japan,* 30; cf. Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound, *'Noh' or Accomplishment* (London, 1916), 65, 67, 119, and *passim.*

the chorus and has it also interpret the thoughts of the principals. As a result there are no soliloquies because the chorus, which "has no part in the action," attends to that problem.

Yeats makes other recommendations to the author based on Pound's text. He should avoid a declamatory style. He may neglect character "which seems to us essential in drama." As for action, the Noh play may be a model: "The adventure itself is often the meeting with ghost, god or goddess at some holy place or much legended tomb."[10] In *At the Hawk's Well* there are both ghost and holy place, the hawk and the well. Pound has a note about the play *Nishikigi*: . . . "the ghosts of the two lovers are kept apart because the woman had steadily refused the hero's offering of charm sticks. The two ghosts are brought together by the piety of a wandering priest. Mr. Yeats tells me that he has found a similar legend in Arran, where the ghosts come to a priest to be married."[11] Finally, the author may well play upon a single metaphor as deliberately "as the echoing rhythm of line in Chinese and Japanese painting." In *Nishikigi* the grass is the basis for this metaphor; in *At the Hawk's Well* the "salt . . . wind" "that blows out of the sea." This wind "is beating a cloud through the skies," it is "from the west," it is "lucky," "stupid." It strips the boughs of the tree and scatters its leaves, leaving it bare. The last lines of the play are: "Who but an idiot would praise A withered tree?"

The actor is almost as subservient as the producer. The parts become ritualistic, not based on "observation of life," not realistic "mimicry and naturalism"; the actors' movements should be "copied from the marionette shows." Even the actor's face will depend on the author's selection of mask and head-dress. Yeats said rather impatiently: "A mask will enable me to substitute for the face of some commonplace player, or for that face repainted to suit his own vulgar fancy, the fine invention of a sculptor, and to bring the audience close enough to the play to hear every inflection of the voice." But he adds that "deep feeling is expressed by a movement of the whole body" and here the actor becomes quite important. In fact the climax of the play will be a "pantomimic dance."[12]

At the Hawk's Well was Yeats's first experiment with his new invention. It was "performed with success in March 1916 in Lady Cunard's London drawing-room" says another biographer of Yeats,

[10] *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*, xiv.

[11] Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 27. Yeats actually said that "the ghost-lovers in *Nishikigi* remind me of the Aran boy and girl who in Lady Gregory's story come to the priest after death to be married." *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*, xiv.

[12] *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*, xiii, x, vii, ii, and *passim*.

A. Norman Jeffares.[13] And in "A Note on 'At the Hawk's Well,' " which appeared in *The Wild Swans at Coole, Other Verses and A Play in Verse* (1917), Yeats says that when the play "was revived in Lady Islington's big drawing-room" a few days later the cast was: "The Young Man, Mr. Henry Ainley; The Old Man, Mr. Allan Wade; The Guardian of the Well, Mr. Ito. The Three Musicians were Mr. Dulac, Mrs. Mann, and Mr. Foulds; and the music was by Mrs. Mann and Mr. Foulds." Ito had been discovered by Pound "living in poverty in a backstairs room." He "had acted in the Noh in Japan."[14]

But *At the Hawk's Well* had much in it for which Yeats was not indebted to Pound. It was written on the eve of the Easter Rebellion (April 23-30, 1916). The Old Man might well stand for a Fenian (Yeats) who has given up hope that Ireland would ever be free. Ellmann says the Old Man is Yeats because he is 50, Yeats's age at that time. The Young Man, Cuchulain, would then be the newer generation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood. (In Ireland since 1916 Cuchulain has represented in sculpture the personification of the defeated Irish of the insurrection.) The Guardian of the Well would be the Unionists or the forces which were opposed to Home Rule for Ireland. Aoife would be Cathleen ni Houlihan.

It has been said that the Easter Rising of 1916 came as a surprise to Yeats. The only direct evidence that I know of may be found in Sir William Rothenstein's *Scattering Branches*. Jeffares quotes it with the observation that Yeats was staying with Rothenstein when the rebellion broke out. Rothenstein says that Yeats "fretted somewhat that he had not been consulted, had been left in ignorance of what was afoot."[15] I am convinced that the leaders of the insurrection did not consult him, but I am not so sure that Yeats was completely surprised. On May 12, 1916, he wrote to Lady Gregory: "Maud Gonne reminds me that she saw the ruined houses about O'Connell Street, and the wounded and dying lying about the streets in the first few days of the war. I perfectly remember the vision and my making light of it and saying that if a true vision at all it could only have a symbolical meaning."[16] The Old Man in *At the Hawk's Well* is less dubious about Cuchulain's vision but he is cautious. He would like to drink of the waters of the well of independence but would not think of suffering, or pain, to keep himself awake:

[13] A. Norman Jeffares, *W. B. Yeats: Man and Poet* (New Haven, Conn., 1949), 165.
[14] Ellmann, *Yeats*, 214.
[15] Jeffares, *Yeats*, 230, 329.
[16] *Ibid.*, 186, 323.

Young Man. . . . If I grow drowsy I can pierce my foot.
Old Man. No, do not pierce it, for the foot is tender,
It feels pain much.

I don't think that the application of *At the Hawk's Well* to contemporary history in 1916 is a coincidence. Yeats, and Maud Gonne, had long believed that England's difficulty would be Ireland's opportunity. When the Old Man says that he has "lain in wait For more than fifty years" and that "Thrice I have awakened from a sudden sleep To find the stones were wet," we may be reminded of England's difficulties in 1854-6 (Crimean War), 1877, when war between England and Russia seemed imminent, and 1899-1902 (Boer War). But the play is more obviously concerned with ancient Ireland. Yeats places it first in his series about Cuchulain which includes also *The Green Helmet, On Baile's Strand,* and *The Only Jealousy of Emer.* The Cuchulain plays are published in that order in Yeats's *Collected Plays* (1935).

II

Ezra Pound, so far as I know, was not interested in the Irish Republican Brotherhood, Home Rule or, even, Cuchulain. His influence extended only to the form of *At the Hawk's Well,* as it did in the case of the other plays of which Yeats said that "with the help of Japanese plays 'translated by Ernest Fenollosa and finished by Ezra Pound,' I have invented a form of drama, distinguished, indirect, and symbolic, and having no need of mob or press to pay its way—an aristocratic form."[17] These plays were: *The Cat and The Moon* (1917, earliest, Cuala version), *The Dreaming of The Bones* (1918 copyright), *The Only Jealousy of Emer* (1919), *Calvary* (1920), *Fighting the Waves* (1929), *The Resurrection* (1931), *The King of the Great Clock Tower* (1934), *The Herne's Egg* (1938), *Purgatory* (1938), and *The Death of Cuchulain* (1939).

Although in the Table of Contents of Yeats's *Collected Plays* (1935) *The Cat and The Moon* is entered "1926," the play was published in 1924, and is there signed "1917." Yeats's "Preface to Lady Gregory," dated "25th. February, 1924," speaks of an impression which the play gave him of "the last act of Synge's 'Well of the Saints' . . . your 'Gaol Gate' . . . 'The Grasshopper' by Mr. Padraic Colum, and . . . a play of Mr. Daniel Corkery's." It is a sort of saint's legend which tells how St. Colman healed a blind man and a

[17]W. B. Yeats, *Essays* (New York, 1924), 274. This is contained in a reprint with some minor variations of Yeats's introduction to *Certain Noble Plays of Japan.*

lame one. The cat in the opening song of the "First Musician" is "the normal man and . . . the moon . . . the opposite he seeks perpetually. . . . Doubtless, too, when the lame man takes the saint upon his back, the normal man has become one with that opposite."[18] Here Yeats is dramatizing views which he expressed in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* (1917). The play was intended for light entertainment and contains a humorous reference to Edward Martyn (the "holy man in . . . the big house") and his friend George Moore ("that old letcher from the county of Mayo"; there are more details in the earlier version). It might, therefore, be called "Kiogen" which is described in *'Noh' or Accomplishment*: "About the twelfth and thirteenth centuries these two elements of comedy—the rustic and the sacred—combined at the Shinto temples. . . . Such farces are called Kiogen."[19]

The Dreaming of the Bones, copyrighted in 1918, first appeared in the *Little Review* for January, 1919. Pound, the London editor, was, I suppose, responsible for its appearance in that magazine. The action occurs in 1916 and it tells of the escape of one of the soldiers of the Irish Republican Army who had "been on his keeping" since the surrender of the Post Office to the Crown forces. He is helped by a ghost but, unlike the priest in *Nishikigi,* the soldier is not sympathetic to dead lovers. In a "Note" on the play by "J. Q." (John Quinn?) there is the information: "This is the second play by Mr. William Butler Yeats written in the manner of the Japanese Noh plays." (J. Q. evidently had not read *The Cat and the Moon.*) And he went on to recommend "Ezra Pound's extraordinarily beautiful rendering of the Noh plays, based upon the translations of Ernest Fenollosa. . . ."[20]

The fourth dance play was *The Only Jealousy of Emer* which, according to Ellmann, "he wrote in 1917 and 1918."[21] In the *Collected Plays* Yeats dated it 1919 and put it at the end of his Cuchulain cycle. The story is a variation on the Alcestis theme which had been familiar to Yeats at least since his note on *The Countess Cathleen* in *Poems* (1904). In this case the wife is not called upon to lay down her life for her husband's:

> I do not ask
> Your life, or any valuable thing;
> You spoke but now of the mere chance that some day

[18] W. B. Yeats, *Wheels and Butterflies* (New York, 1925), 124.
[19] Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 117.
[20] "The Dreaming of the Bones," *Little Review,* Jan., 1919, 61.
[21] Ellmann, *Yeats,* 230.

> You'd be the apple of his eye again
> When old and ailing, but renounce that chance
> And he shall live again.

So Emer sacrifices her love that Cuchulain may live; and he, awakening from a trance, embraces his mistress, Eithne Inguba. The form of the play Pound would have called "Kazura, or Onna-mono." Its action follows Cuchulain's mad battle with the waves. ". . . after battle comes peace, or Yu-gen, mysterious calm, and in time of peace the cases of love come to pass. Moreover, the battle-pieces are limited to men; so we now have the female piece in contrast. . . ."[22]

Calvary, dated 1920 in the *Collected Plays,* is indebted to Oscar Wilde. In his *Autobiography,* Yeats retold Wilde's sequel to certain of Christ's miracles, especially Lazarus' ingratitude after he had been recalled from death.[23] In *Calvary* Lazarus makes the same point when Christ tells him that He has "conquered death, And all the dead shall be raised up again":

> Then what I heard is true. I thought to die
> When my allotted years ran out again;
> And that, being gone, you could not hinder it;
> But now you will blind with light the solitude
> That death has made; you will disturb that corner
> Where I had thought I might lie safe for ever.

After Lazarus comes Judas and finally the three Roman soldiers who cast dice for His robe. All are more interested in themselves than they are in the crucifixion. Still, I think Pound would have classified *Calvary* as a "Shugen": "Shugen, or congratulatory pieces are limited to Noh of the Gods (that is, to pieces connected with some religious rite). . . . The gods have guarded the country from Kami-yo (the age of the gods) down to the . . . present. . . . So in praise of them and in prayer we perform first this Kami-no."[24]

During the twenties, Yeats worked over *The Cat and the Moon,* which was first produced in 1926, drafted *The Resurrection,* and converted *The Only Jealousy of Emer* into prose, calling the newer version *Fighting the Waves. Fighting the Waves* is a retreat from Yeats's original intention that these dance plays should be performed "in a private house or studio." It had been put on a public stage in Holland, and Hildo Van Krop had "made his powerful masks." "Because the dramatist who can collaborate with a great sculptor is lucky, I rewrote the play not only to fit it for such a stage but to

[22] Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 15.
[23] *Autobiography,* 240; cf. Oscar Wilde, *Complete Works,* ed. Robert Ross (Boston, n.d.), III, 204-6.
[24] Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 14.

free it from abstraction and confusion." As a result Yeats says: "*Fighting the Waves* is in itself nothing, a mere occasion for sculptor and dancer, for the exciting dramatic music of George Antheil."[25] In spite of these changes Pound, I think, might still have called the play "Kazura, or Onna-mono."[26]

The Resurrection, dedicated to "Junzo Sato who gave me a sword," was drafted in 1925 and read to a small audience in Yeats's Merrion Square house. Yeats has described this "first sketch" as "more dialogue than play." In 1926 he was tinkering with it; by 1931 he was ready to publish the Preface: "I had begun it with an ordinary stage seen in the mind's eye, curtained walls, a window and door at back, a curtained door at left. I now changed the stage directions and wrote songs for the unfolding and folding of the curtain that it might be played in a studio or drawing-room like my dance plays. . . ." Like *Fighting the Waves, The Resurrection* is in prose. Like *Calvary* it may be called a "Shugen"; like *Calvary* it has to do with Jesus. But it is the risen Christ who is the centre of attention. I might also say that, like *The Cat and the Moon*, the opening musician's song with its reference to a star sets a psychological rather than geographical background for the play.

The Resurrection had been a popular Irish theme since Oscar Wilde in one of his stories, retold by Yeats in his *Autobiography*, introduced the heretical opinion that Christ wasn't really dead but had gone into exile rather than discredit the story that He had conquered death. George Moore elaborated this heresy in *The Brook Kerith*. Yeats's indebtedness to Virgil and Shelley has been noted but not these Irish analogues. As for Yeats's orthodoxy, he accepts the Resurrection on the ground that Dionysius, too, rose from the dead.[27] In the play there are four characters: the Hebrew, the Greek, the Syrian, and Christ. The Hebrew is an Ebionite whose belief is that Christ "was nothing more than a man, the best man who ever lived," but who "thought that he himself was the Messiah." The Greek, also called "a Christian," is a Docetist. He says: "No god has ever been buried; no god has ever suffered. Christ only seemed to be born, only seemed to eat, seemed to sleep, seemed to walk, seemed to die." The debate between these two heretics is interrupted by followers of Dionysius who are celebrating the death and resurrection of their god. The heretical Christians look down on these celebrants as "the most ignorant and excitable class of Asiatic Greeks, the dregs of the

[25] *Wheels and Butterflies*, 61-2.
[26] Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 15.
[27] *Wheels and Butterflies*, 112-15.

population." The Greek even considers them un-Greek. Then, there is a knock at the door. It is the Syrian. He announces that Christ is risen. The Hebrew will not believe it. The Greek is not convinced. The worshippers of Dionysius suddenly cry, "God has arisen! God has arisen!" They come before the house in which the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Syrian are standing guard over the Apostles; they all stare at it. Christ enters the room. The Greek "goes slowly up to the figure and passes his hand over its side." He screams: "The heart of a phantom is beating! The heart of a phantom is beating!"

I don't know whether Pound was familiar with *The Resurrection*; he certainly read *The King of the Great Clock Tower*. In June, 1934 Yeats visited him. Yeats says in his preface: "When I had written all but the last lyric I went a considerable journey partly to get the advice of a poet not of my school who would, as he did some years ago, say what he thought." To judge by Yeats's report of the conversation, Pound was already somewhat out of his mind: "He took my manuscript and went away denouncing Dublin as 'a reactionary hole' because I had said that I was re-reading Shakespeare, would go on to Chaucer, and found all that I wanted of modern life in 'detection and the wild west.'" Perhaps it was Yeats's failure to admire Pound's heroes, Mussolini and Hitler, which was responsible for the result: "Next day his judgment came and that in a single word 'Putrid.'" Undaunted, Yeats finished *The King of the Great Clock Tower* and, although Pound disliked it, described it as another of those "little dance plays, founded upon a Japanese model." But it was not designed to "be performed in studio or drawing-room": Yeats remarked that "*Fighting the Waves* and the present play so far imitate the Japanese model that they climax in a dance, substitute suggestion for representation," and "like the Japanese plays themselves they are stage plays."

If Pound objected to the content, and I see no reason to believe that he repudiated the form, perhaps it was because the central action came from an old Gaelic story. In his preface Yeats says of one striking incident: "The dance with the severed head, suggests the central idea of Wilde's *Salome*. . . . In attempting to put that story into a dance play I found that I had gone close to Salome's dance in Wilde's play. But in his play the dance is before the head is cut off." Such stuff was not what Fascist Italy expected from its writers. For I think Pound applied a Fascist measure to Yeats's play; but not to his own *Cantos*. Or if he did, he was even madder than Yeats paints him. It may also be that Pound felt the political overtones of *At the Hawk's Well* were missing from *The King of the Great Clock*

Tower, but I doubt whether Ezra noticed the political nature of the earlier play.

The Herne's Egg, published in January, 1938, has no chorus of musicians and too many in the cast for presentation in a drawing-room. Still I would class it with the dance plays because of the sketchy scenery and intricate choreography. The stage directions for the beginning of the play say: "Many men fighting with swords and shields, but sword and sword, shield and sword, never meet. The men move rhythmically as if in a dance; when swords approach one another cymbals clash, when swords and shields approach drums boom." Scattered through the play there are other dances, such as Attracta's of which one of the persons in the play says:

> Her limbs grow rigid, she seems
> A doll upon a wire.

Pound, too, might have classed *The Herne's Egg* as a sort of Noh play, especially as a "Shura, or battle-piece": ". . . to defeat and put out the devils, we perform the Shura. (That is to say, it is sympathetic magic.)" Or if not a "Shura," perhaps as a cross between "Shura" and "Kiogen."[28]

The Herne's Egg is far more farcical than *The Cat and the Moon.* Ellmann quotes from an unpublished letter of December 19, 1935 Yeats's description of the play as "the strangest, wildest thing" he has ever written. Since the basic action involves a blasphemer being punished by an angry god, Ellmann disregards the ridiculous to find theological implications in the theme.[29] I suspect that Corney's speech as the curtain falls tells more about the meaning of *The Herne's Egg*:

> I have heard that a donkey carries its young
> Longer than any other beast,
> Thirteen months it must carry it.
> *(He laughs)*
> All that trouble and nothing to show for it,
> Nothing but just another donkey.

Like *The Herne's Egg, Purgatory* departs from Yeats's original plan for his dance plays. There are neither musicians nor masks in it, and there is only the suggestion of a dance. Still the scenery is inexpensive. The play can be performed in a drawing-room. Descriptive passages about the setting are incorporated in the dialogue. The adventure recounts a meeting with a ghost at a much legended spot.

[28]Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 14-15, 116-17.
[29]Ellmann, *Yeats,* 284, 318.

Pound might have classified *Purgatory* as "Oni-No": "Here are shown the struggles and the sins of mortals, and the audience, even while they sit for pleasure, will begin to think about Buddha and the coming world. It is for this reason that Noh is called Mu-jin-Kyo, the immeasurable scripture."[30]

Ellmann thinks *Purgatory* is Yeats's "finest" and links it with "an unpublished play written in 1884," a poem "The Death of Cuchulain" (1892), and the two translations of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, "the first in 1912, the second in 1927," because it involves parricide.[31] I, too, think it is a fine play, but I would add that it has unmistakable political overtones.

There are two persons, or ghosts, in the play, an "Old Man" and a "Boy." The scene is "A ruined house and a bare tree in the background." The Old Man tells the Boy that the big old ruin is "the house where I was born." "My mother that was your grand-dam owned it." She had been a daughter of the ascendancy who lived in the big house:

> Great people lived and died in this house;
> Magistrates, colonels, members of Parliament,
> Captains and Governors, and long ago
> Men that had fought at Aughrim and the Boyne.
> Some that had gone on Government work
> To London or to India came home to die,
> Or came from London every spring
> To look at the may-blossom in the park.

But she married "a groom in a training stable," and when she inherited the big house, he cut down the lovely trees and "squandered everything she had." After she had died in childbirth he "burned down the house when drunk." Surely Yeats was thinking of the Irish government which allowed the destruction of Coole Park after Lady Gregory's death.

The child who was born is now the Old Man. He was sixteen when his father destroyed the historic home. During the fire "I stuck him with a knife," the Old Man confesses. After the parricide he became "a pedlar on the roads," as he still is. He calls his son, the Boy, a "bastard that a pedlar got Upon a tinker's daughter in a ditch."

The Old Man and the Boy are talking together on the anniversary of the night in which the drunkard had begot his murderer. The Old Man hears ghostly hoof-beats and sees his mother in an empty

[30]Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 15.
[31]Ellmann, *Yeats*, 276, 22.

window. The Boy is heedless, thinking only of how he can get his share of the money which the Old Man has in his bag. Soon the two struggle for it and the Boy says:

> What if I killed you? You killed my grand-dad,
> Because you were young and he was old.
> Now I am young and you are old.

Suddenly the Boy sees his grandfather in the window. He cries: "A dead, living, murdered man!" In his horror he covers his eyes. The Old Man stabs him to death saying: "My father and my son on the same jack-knife!" Then he apostrophizes the tree:

> It stands there like a purified soul,
> All cold, sweet, glistening light.
> Dear mother, the window is dark again,
> But you are in the light because
> I finished all that consequence.

Thus the tree, like the ruined house, has become part of the action, a trick which I find described in Pound's notes to *'Noh' or Accomplishment*. For example, in his introduction to "Awoi No Uye," Pound says: "The play opens with the death-bed of Awoi, and in Mrs. Fenollosa's diary I find the statement that 'Awoi, her struggles, sickness, and death are represented by a red, flowered kimono, folded once length-wise, and laid at the front edge of the stage.' " Similarly, in describing "Koi No Omoni ('The Burden of Love')" Pound says: "From the very first the burden of love lay in the centre front of the stage, thus 'becoming actually one of the characters.' It was a cube done up in red and gold brocade and tied with green cords."[32]

Yeats's last dance play was *The Death of Cuchulain*. He was correcting portions of it on January 26, 1939, two days before he died. It departs only slightly from the form of *At the Hawk's Well*. An "Old Man" instead of a musician speaks the prelude: "I have been asked to produce a play called *The Death of Cuchulain*. It is the last of a series of plays which has for theme his life and death . . . I wanted an audience of fifty or a hundred, and if there are more, I beg them not to shuffle their feet or talk when the actors are speaking. . . . There is a singer, a piper and a drummer . . . I promise a dance." Clearly the play is designed for production in a small theatre, rather than a drawing-room. And there is a third departure, the envoy is sung by a street-singer instead of an instrumentalist.

Ellmann has observed of Yeats that in "*The King of the Great Clock Tower, The Death of Cuchulain,* 'The Circus Animals' Deser-

[32]Fenollosa and Pound, *'Noh,'* 193, 247.

tion,' and elsewhere he calls all his characters together as if to say, here is the universe which I have created and peopled and made as real as anything in the world."[33] Ellmann might also have observed that these two dance plays by their very form are a tribute to Ezra, the helpful. He might have pointed out the political significance of the street-singer's identification of Cuchulain with the spirit which animated the Irish Republican Brotherhood in its headquarters during Easter Week, 1916:

> What stood in the Post Office
> With Pearse and Connolly?
> What comes out of the mountain
> Where men first shed their blood?
> Who thought Cuchulain till it seemed
> He stood where they had stood?

III

If Pound had escaped to Dublin in 1943, he would have been welcomed by friends of Yeats because Pound had helped him to invent a new form of drama. He might also have been greeted by friends of James Joyce inasmuch as he helped to publish *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and parts of *Ulysses*.[34] As for Shaw, Pound's letters reveal that his opinion of G.B.S. deteriorated until he wrote to Professor Schelling on July 9, 1922: "If I ever plagued you about Shaw in the old days, I apologize. He is fundamentally trivial."[35] Yet Shaw did not mind Pound's dislike, if he even knew about it, and Shaw's Irish supporters probably shared his indifference. Years later when he visited Japan in the spring of 1933, he was taken to see the Noh. His guide, Toyoichiro Nogami, reports: "Mr. Shaw said that he was more interested in the Noh than in anything else he saw in Japan. Above all he greatly admired its unique stage construction. This is exactly what Monsieur Claudel praised."[36] There is no mention of Fenollosa or Pound in Shaw's reported remarks. But in view of his cordial relations with Lady Gregory, Yeats, and the Abbey Theatre, I am quite confident that Shaw had heard of Pound's interest in the Noh long before 1933.

In Ireland, Pound would have found other sympathizers. De Valera was representing such men when he kept Eire out of the Second World War. I am not referring to Fascists or anti-Semites,

[33] Ellmann, *Yeats*, 280.
[34] Herbert Gorman, *James Joyce* (New York, 1939), 221, 247.
[35] *The Letters of Ezra Pound*, 181.
[36] Toyoichiro Nogami, *Japanese Noh Plays: How to See Them* (Toyko, 1934), 12.

but to the people Synge wrote about in *The Playboy of the Western World*.

In a moment of dejection Yeats wrote: "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone, It's with O'Leary in the grave." Later he admitted his error in his poems about Easter Week, 1916. I think romantic Ireland is still very much alive. Perhaps that's why Pound never cared to live there:

> . . . I would rather have my sweet,
> Though rose-leaves die of grieving,
>
> Than do high deeds in Hungary
> To pass all men's believing.

REVIEWS

A PROPHET NOT WITHOUT HONOUR* — A. F. W. PLUMPTRE

John Maynard Keynes was one of the really great men of our times. He has been much misunderstood and much abused. Part of this abuse was deserved—certainly Keynes was nothing if not provocative—but much of it arose from ignorance and vindictiveness. Mr. Harrod's biography will stand as a fair record of his achievements and a just appraisal of his influence—an influence which extended to all Canadian universities and, not least, to the Canadian government at Ottawa.

As a schoolboy at Eton and an undergraduate at King's College, Cambridge, Keynes was already remarkable for his ability and diversity. His crystalline mind, his persuasive and provocative tongue, his vivid and often mordant wit, his creative imagination, his capacity for detail, his flair for organization, his wealth of human sympathy and friendship, his unchallengeable integrity, and his unswerving idealism—all these were with him from the beginning. He was the son of a Cambridge don, John Neville Keynes, distinguished in the field of political economy. Maynard's specialty became mathematics but they never engrossed his interest and when the time drew near for his final university examinations he had to tear himself away from his other interests which were chiefly literary and philosophic. His closest undergraduate friends were in these other fields and included Lytton Strachey, Leonard Woolf, Clive Bell—and our own C. R. Fay.

After graduating he spent two years as a civil servant in the India Office; then he went back to Cambridge in 1909 first as a lecturer in the newly established faculty of economics and, the following year, as a Fellow of King's College. In this period he laid the groundwork for two books which did not appear until after the war: one on *Indian Currency and Finance* and another, on the borderlines of mathematics, logic, and philosophy, entitled *A Treatise on Probability*. When war came, Whitehall had not forgotten him and he was drawn back there, this time into the Treasury. By the end of the war he was, despite his lack of years, the man chiefly in charge of the government's financial relations with other countries—the United States on the one hand and European countries on the other. This heavy administrative task he fulfilled with great success. He went to the Peace Conference

**The Life of John Maynard Keynes.* By R. F. HARROD. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd. [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited]. 1951. Pp. xvi, 674. $5.00.

as principal representative of the Treasury. From this post he resigned because he was convinced that the Allied demands on Germany were running far beyond, on the one hand, the amounts that could be justified under the terms of the Armistice and, on the other hand, the capacity of the Germans to provide reparations or the willingness of the rest of the world to receive them in the form of German exports. In short, the proposed treaty was unjust and impracticable and he foresaw the gravest consequences, political and economic, if a serious attempt was made to put it into force. These views he set forth with astonishing effectiveness in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, published late in 1919. It was the world's first taste of Keynes as a passionate advocate, confident both in the rightness of his analysis and in the righteousness of his cause, his case couched in elegant prose and bolstered with abundant statistics.

Up to this point Mr. Harrod's biography carries us most successfully. The story, and it is a fascinating one, is told with sympathy and insight and grace. It is embellished by deft character sketches of Keynes's closer friends and associates; these sketches illumine both the interests and the character of the man himself. Beyond this point, however, the biography is not so completely successful. There are four reasons. First, Mr. Harrod's extended explanations of Keynes's innovations in economic theory seem to fall between two stools; despite their lucidity they are not really brief and simple enough for the layman (perhaps they could not be) and, on the other hand, they are not likely nor are they intended to be of any special use to the expert. Second, both in these sections and in later ones relating to Keynes's policies during the Second World War, Mr. Harrod sometimes obtrudes his own views rather unnecessarily and irritatingly. Third, especially in the sections on the Second World War, he sometimes strains himself to be dramatic, putting imaginary words into Keynes's mouth and imaginary thoughts into his head. Fourth, the story, which up to this point flowed very smoothly, gets rather jerky and jumpy, hopping from incident to incident, from interest to interest.

For this latter fault we should perhaps blame Keynes himself more than his biographer. His life became exceedingly complex; it had more dimensions than could readily be portrayed on paper. Further work for the government was out of the question for the indefinite future; his resignation from the Treasury might have been reversed but the things he had said in his book about British policy as it developed in Paris under the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, could not be unsaid. Accordingly, he decided to re-establish his Cambridge

connection. At the same time he realized that this would by no means occupy his interests so he planned to spend at least half of his time in London. Thus it came about that, in addition to the teacher and writer who has shifted the bed of some of the main rivers of economic thought, he was many other things as well: he had extensive business and financial interests on his own behalf and for others; he was a prolific journalist; he was closely associated with the management of two periodicals and edited a third; and he was an active and discriminating patron of the arts. For most of the inter-war period he was *all* these things. Then, during the Second World War, he was accepted back into the Treasury. He became leader of the United Kingdom delegations at most of the important wartime international financial discussions (Lend Lease, Bretton Woods, U.S.-U.K. post-war loan, Canada-U.K. loan, etc.), a director of the Bank of England, and a member of the House of Lords. These activities, loaded onto a heart that had been seriously weakened by an attack in 1937, forced him to drop some, but by no means all, of his earlier ones; in particular his concern for the arts took a new and more active turn.

This list of activities must be elaborated to be appreciated. On the business side, he was an active and skilful investor on his own account. Starting with nothing but an academic salary, he left an estate worth half a million pounds. He acted as adviser to investment concerns in London and New York. He was chairman of the board of one insurance company and a member of the board of another; these responsibilities, of course, involved quite different investment policies from those suited to his own private affairs. A third set of investment policies was required in his position as Bursar at King's College, whose freely investable property multiplied ten-fold under his régime. As Bursar he became responsible for large agricultural estates, and he bought a farm of his own in Sussex. In the management of all these enterprises—and this we have from others besides Mr. Harrod—he took an intense and detailed interest; only those who knew him best will realize his capacity for intricate detail as well as for broad policy.

Keynes's journalistic and publishing activities were closely tied up with his political interests. He was always a Liberal, although never doctrinaire, and sat eventually on the Liberal benches in the Lords. He was particularly active in the election of 1929 in support of Lloyd George who was sponsoring a large programme of public works to relieve unemployment. This and other Liberal planks were traceable in part to Keynes himself, chiefly through his work in the annual Liberal Summer School of which he was a founder and through the "Liberal Yellow Book" (*Britain's Industrial Future*) of

which he was one of the chief authors. At an earlier date, when the *Nation*, a Liberal weekly, was reorganized, Keynes became chairman of its board; later, when it was merged with the *New Statesman*, he continued on the board for a time. And, quite apart from direct political or party connections, he continually wrote on economic and related matters for newspapers and other English periodicals—the *Manchester Guardian, The Times*, and many others. Finally, although this activity was perhaps more academic than journalistic, he was editor, from 1911 to 1944, of the *Economic Journal*, a quarterly publication of the highest standing amongst professional economists.

In 1925 he married Lydia Lopokova, famous première danseuse of many ballets. This surprised people who thought of him as an economist or financier or journalist, but not those who, knowing him personally, realized his wide contacts and deep affections amongst literary people. His direct assistance to the arts began in 1918 when, still at the Treasury, he persuaded the Chancellor of the Exchequer to use some French funds to buy modern French paintings for the National Gallery. His own valuable collection of modern paintings began at the same time. He built up an even more valuable collection of rare books. In 1930 he was responsible for founding the London Artists Association by means of which he and some other patrons underwrote stable earnings through picture sales for a number of promising English artists. In 1936 he launched, supervised, and largely financed the construction of a first-class theatre in Cambridge. In 1942 he became the first chairman of the Committee for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (C.E.M.A.), a wartime organization designed "to carry music, drama, and pictures to places which otherwise would be cut off from all contact with the masterpieces of happier days and times; to air-raid shelters, to wartime hostels, to factories, to mining villages." In 1945 C.E.M.A. was transformed into the now well-known Arts Council of Great Britain in which he took a very active interest until his death a year later. "State patronage of the arts has crept in" he said in a broadcast at the time, and he gladly gave it a helping hand. Keynes is quoted in the recent Massey Report in support of state patronage of the arts in Canada.

Mr. Harrod has succeeded in what he himself described as his main purpose: to portray the life of a great leader of thought over the period when nineteenth-century security and stability gave place to twentieth-century doubts and dangers. Naturally Keynes's ideas changed with the times, even on the issue of free trade, and he readily admitted it: "I seem to see the elder parrots sitting round

and saying: 'You can rely on us. Every day for thirty years, regardless of the weather, we have said "what a lovely morning!" But this is a bad bird. He says one thing one day, and something else the next.' " Or again: "The difference between me and some other people is that I oppose Mr. Lloyd George when he is wrong and support him when he is right." Keynes came to stand for a substantial measure of state interference and control, especially in monetary and financial fields, but never for doctrinaire socialism. His great strength lay in his detailed knowledge of current affairs, his sense of what was within the bounds of practicability, his amazing quickness and lucidity, and his ability to put his case forward convincingly. Mr. Harrod would probably agree that his chief weakness lay in the fact that he apparently never gave much thought to the persistent limitations of men who form democratic governments, to the conflicts of economic and social classes, and to the inability of political parties and bureaucracies to change direction quickly. As one of his students once remarked, he was always liable to think of "the government" as a group of keen, adaptable philanthropists rather like himself. However, his lack of preconceptions about the nature of the state may in the end have been an advantage to him. Certainly he could not have prescribed so brilliantly and in the end so successfully for the world's ills if he had been intellectually tied to the dogmas of laissez-faire or of Karl Marx; and it is surely possible that, in a measure, the state will become what economics requires it to become.

History will undoubtedly uphold Mr. Harrod's verdict that Keynes's impact on economic thought will be deep and permanent. He recast some of the main sections of economic theory into line with what he conceived to be the needs of the time, i.e. into a form which emphasized the need for a certain amount of government intervention particularly in the field of domestic and international finance for the main purpose of maintaining "full employment" while leaving the maximum freedom in other directions. These views first began to emerge in his *Tract on Monetary Reform* (1923) but were greatly altered and extended in his *Treatise on Money* (1930) and finally in his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1935).

His teaching carried increasing weight in his own country, although the Baldwin Government was well to his right and the Attlee Government is at least as far to his left. It materially influenced the New Deal and subsequent policies in Washington. But it may be argued that, over the past fifteen years, the capital it has influenced most is Ottawa: the attempt at "reflation" in the mid nineteen-thirties; the early wartime monetary expansion to absorb unemploy-

ment; the strong emphasis later in the war on a pay-as-you-go policy with recourse to "compulsory savings" (Keynes's invention); family allowances as a post-war measure to prevent a recurrence of the social and economic disorders of the thirties; abandonment of virtually all wartime controls except those over foreign exchange; and, in the most recent inflationary movement, the reliance on credit restriction and other "indirect" controls as an alternative to price ceilings.

Keynes's teaching also influenced international attitudes in Ottawa. It is no accident that Mr. Harrod should twice refer to the Canadian experts as the only ones, other than those of the United States and the United Kingdom, to make a material contribution, at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, to the establishment of the International Fund and Bank. These two institutions crowned with a measure of success the international plans and policies which Keynes had been urging for the preceding twenty years.

At that conference Keynes was the dominating figure. Mr. Harrod records that another member of the British delegation, Professor Robbins (who was then head of the Economic Section of the War Cabinet Secretariat), wrote in his diary at the time:

> I often find myself thinking that Keynes must be one of the most remarkable men that have ever lived—the quick logic, the birdlike swoop of intuition, the vivid fancy, the wide vision, above all the incomparable sense of the fitness of words, all combine to make something several degrees beyond the limit of ordinary human achievement. Certainly, in our own age, only the Prime Minister is of comparable stature. He, of course, surpasses him. But the greatness of the Prime Minister is something much easier to understand than the genius of Keynes. For, in the last analysis, the special qualities of the Prime Minister are the traditional qualities of our race raised to the scale of grandeur. Whereas the special qualities of Keynes are something outside all that. He uses the classical style of our life and language, it is true, but it is shot through with something which is not traditional, a unique unearthly quality of which one can only say that it is pure genius. The Americans sat entranced as the God-like visitor sang and the golden light played around.

Perhaps even Professor Robbins was dazzled by the golden light. But was there any one of us who knew him and was not dazzled?

THREE SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

H. S. Wilson

Among the profusion of books about Shakespeare that pour from the presses each year, all witnessing to the continuing vitality of Shakespeare's art if not always to the sobriety of his admirers' judgment, the three studies here reviewed may be recommended as among the most distinguished of recent contributions to our understanding

and critical appreciation of the greatest of English authors.* All three works represent a uniformly high level of scholarly competence, yet they are calculated in their usefulness quite as much for the cultivated amateur as for the more or less "professional" student of Shakespeare; and each work typifies signally though not exclusively a particular department or method of Shakespearean study. The *Shakespeare Survey*, a work of collaboration under distinguished editorship now in its fourth year of publication, has already become an indispensable Shakespearean reference. The study of *Macbeth*, the work of a lawyer who thus preserves his amateur standing among Shakespeareans, is a piece of historical scholarship of which any professional scholar might well be proud. And Professor Farnham's sequel to his valuable earlier study, *The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy*, upholds the honour of the teaching profession by being one of the most thoughtful and stimulating of recent attempts to criticize the plays as an organic growth of Shakespeare's dramatic genius.

Shakespeare Survey, issued under the sponsorship of the universities of Birmingham and Manchester, the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, and with an advisory board and panel of correspondents representing the study and production of Shakespeare's plays in many parts of the world, has aimed from its inception to comprehend all the main activities concerned with Shakespeare, to assess the present state of Shakespearean scholarship, and to indicate profitable lines of future development both in the study of Shakespeare and in the producing of his plays. Thus each annual volume has contained a survey of some department of Shakespearean study during the past fifty years: Shakespearean productions, Shakespeare's theatre, his life, and current methods of studying the plays. The reports of correspondents and the essays have presented a conspectus of Shakespearean activities in many different countries. There have been, as well, accounts of the Shakespearean collections in such centres as the Folger Shakespeare Library, the British Museum, the Bodleian, and Stratford; reviews of notable Shakespearean productions; illustrative plates and reproductions of

**Shakespeare Survey: An Annual Survey of Shakespearian Study and Production*, edited by ALLARDYCE NICOLL. Cambridge: At the University Press [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, Limited.] Nos. 1-4, 1948-51. $2.75 per number.

The Royal Play of Macbeth: When, Why, and How It was Written. By HENRY N. PAUL. New York: The Macmillan Company [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited]. 1950. Pp. xiv, 438. $7.50.

Shakespeare's Tragic Frontier. By WILLARD FARNHAM. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press [Toronto: Oxford University Press]. 1950. Pp. x, 289. $5.00.

scarce Shakespeare documents; and critical essays related to the special topic of each volume's survey. The contributors have included such well known names as Allardyce Nicoll, M. St. Clare Byrne, C. J. Sisson, Kenneth Muir, Hardin Craig, Dover Wilson, G. E. Bentley, John Gielgud, and many others. Each volume concludes with a critique of the year's work in Shakespeare studies conducted by such authorities as Una Ellis-Fermor, Clifford Leech, and James G. McManaway.

Amid such a wealth of material useful for the up-to-date study of Shakespeare, it would be invidious to attempt to indicate personal preferences among the various contributions. All those concerned in this undertaking are to be congratulated upon the excellence of these volumes in which every student of Shakespeare is bound to find great satisfaction.

Mr. Henry N. Paul's purpose in his study of *Macbeth* is to determine with as much exactitude as possible when, why, and how the play came to be written. To do this, he has studied with a wealth of interesting detail the circumstances which point to its preparation for a special performance before King James and his royal visitor King Christian of Denmark on August 7, 1606, as he surmises with great probability. Furthermore, he has shown, from his meticulous examination of the text of the play, how Shakespeare drew not merely from his favourite Holinshed but from many other sources for Scottish history, upon the extensive lore of witchcraft, and especially upon the king's own writings and his known biases, in the effort to please his royal patron; and how the play, thus enriched by much of the king's own favourite learning, becomes at once an adroit compliment to the royal wisdom, and, by implication, at least, a kind of mirror for princes in which James might see and applaud the downfall of tyranny at the hands of his own royal progenitors.

Except for the commonly recognized interpolation of the forty-eight lines concerning Hecate and the witches' dance (III, v; IV, i), Mr. Paul regards the text of the play as all Shakespeare's. He cogently defends the authenticity of the sometimes questioned "bleeding sergeant" scene (I, ii) as an effective though hasty and unrevised addition made to the play after it was virtually complete by Shakespeare himself. The compressed brevity of the text he attributes to the desire to please the king's taste for pithy utterance as well as to avoid wearying a monarch known to fall asleep at stage performances or to leave before they were over. At this particular performance, Mr. Paul gives ample reason for thinking, James did not even doze.

Of particular interest is the discussion of the role of the witches

in the play, whose prophecies Mr. Paul inclines to regard as projections of Macbeth's fervid imagination and wishful thinking; though he sums up the dramatic effect of the supernatural element in the play most aptly when he writes: "Everyone is left free to decide whether the deeds of the witches are real or fantastical. For the dramatist did not know how far he might dare to lead his king. He had been told of the general trend of James's thoughts toward a rational position [i.e., concerning witchcraft], but just where the king stood at the moment he could not know; and so he left it for him to go as far as he pleased and no farther." (pp. 65-6)

That *Macbeth* was expressly designed to compliment and please the taste of King James has of course long been recognized; but Mr. Paul has interpreted the text with such discernment and marshalled such a host of cogent evidences as to provide a new illumination of the play in relation to this fact.

Shakespeare's Tragic Frontier is a study of the four latest tragedies of Shakespeare—*Timon of Athens, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus*—which groups them as successive portraits of a deeply flawed tragic hero in whom the paradox of the evil inherent in great natures is carried to a point beyond which the tragic effect becomes impossible.

In his earlier *Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy*, Professor Farnham showed how the common medieval conception of tragedy as a fall of a great man through a turn of Fortune's wheel or the ordinance of Providence, a tragic force external to the hero, evolved into the Shakespearean conception of the tragedy resulting from the inward flaw of the hero. In his sequel, Professor Farnham offers a complete pattern for the evolution of Shakespearean tragedy. The group of *Richard III, Titus Andronicus, Romeo and Juliet*, and *Richard II* he regards as comprising Shakespeare's "early tragic world." All written before 1598, these tragedies reveal no settled form: they "had been a series of diverse experiments, and one measure of their diversity had been the wide variation in their heroes, from the strong to the weak and from the villainously guilty to the piteously unfortunate" (p. 3). In the following group of *Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Othello*, and *Lear*, Shakespeare perfected the conception of the noble hero with a tragic flaw. All four heroes, though they do wrong, we unhesitatingly place upon the side of good: "Brutus and Hamlet have a consuming desire to further the cause of right, and Othello and Lear suffer the tortures of remorse when they realize the wrong they have done. . . . Their tragic flaws do not reach into the centres of their characters. . . . The natural evil not found in the noble heroes

of Shakespeare's middle tragic world is found in the villains. . . . There is definite villainy working in general against good and in particular against the hero." (pp. 4-6)

The deepening of the effective power of evil in *Othello* and *Lear* marks a transition to the latest world of Shakespearean tragedy, in which the heroes are all deeply flawed. Timon, Macbeth (who, though he would fain repent, is too deeply committed to evil to go back), Antony, and Coriolanus, are all studies of the mixture of good and evil in man, with the balance so fluctuating that our feeling for them varies between antipathy and sympathy; and the heroes so involve themselves in catastrophe that outright villainy has little or no part in their tragic world. In *Coriolanus*, the latest of these tragedies, this paradox of human nobility that seems to spring from and be engulfed by its very opposite—here courage and magnanimity united with blind arrogance—is carried to the frontier beyond which tragedy cannot go: "*Coriolanus* is a magnificent failure in which Shakespeare seems to have brought his tragic inspiration to an end by taking tragedy into an area of paradox beyond the effective reach of merely human pity" (p. 264).

This mood of tragic paradox Professor Farnham associates with the literary temper of Shakespeare's England at the beginning of the seventeenth century and especially with the work of Chapman, Webster, and Donne; and he submits each of the four last tragedies to a careful and illuminating analysis within the terms of this frame of reference.

Shakespeare's plays, arranged in the approximate chronological order now generally accepted, represent a growth of the poet's art, for Shakespeare was never content to repeat himself, and the quality of the plays hardly supports the hypothesis that he ever allowed his art notably to slacken. Such a study as Professor Farnham's is especially valuable because it emphasizes the continuity and rational progression of Shakespeare's dramatic purposes, instead of resorting to the familiar expedient of gently blaming Shakespeare or excusing him for what we may find less than perfect in the plays. Professor Farnham's attempt is rather to trace a principle of coherent development in Shakespeare's art that may enable us to comprehend the canon of the plays as an organic whole. No single study of this sort is likely to be exhaustive, for the work of art is more complex and comprehensive than any critical idea of it. Shakespeare's tragedies are indeed tragedies of character, as Professor Farnham has considered them. This is one clue to their artistic unity. But they are also in some sense tragedies of circumstance; and it is possible to trace other threads of con-

tinuity among the tragedies, as in other parts of the canon, or in its whole extent. This critical approach to the plays, in our time when each separate play has been so elaborately and voluminously examined, is especially appropriate. Professor Farnham has provided a notable example of the method.

RHYTHM IN THE NOVEL* — HUGH MACLENNAN

It is poignantly fitting that the last published work of E. K. Brown should be entitled *Rhythm in the Novel* and should deal with various aspects of those mysterious patterns of repetition which constantly occur in life and which the best novelists strive to depict in their work.

Rhythm in the Novel is dedicated to the memory of Brown's great teacher, Professor W. J. Alexander. It is a compilation of the Alexander Lectures which Brown delivered at the University of Toronto in 1949-50. In his introduction he tells us that it was from Alexander that "I first learned the meaning of literature and of literary study," and that "I made a habit of something rare in Toronto, and visited his classes. There was not a series of his lectures I did not hear at least twice, and the course on nineteenth-century poets given to students in the final year I heard four times."

When Brown returned to Toronto to deliver these lectures based on rhythmic patterns in the novel, which are—or ought to be—based on similar patterns in life, he was fulfilling just such a pattern himself. He was returning to shed light in the very place where he himself had been enlightened. This rare, gallant, and extraordinary man must certainly have been aware that his own experience was underlining his thesis.

Rhythm in the Novel consists of four essays. The first deals with repetitive patterns in phrase, character, and incident, the second with expanding symbols, the third with interweaving themes. The book concludes with a detailed study of rhythm in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India,* which Brown, after many re-readings, came to believe to be a truly great work of art. This final chapter rounds out and illustrates the thesis established in the previous three. The greatness of *A Passage to India*—and, by implication, of any novel—depends in Brown's view on its mastery of the various forms of rhythmic device, of the effects that come "from the combination of phrases, characters

**Rhythm in the Novel.* By E. K. Brown. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1950. Pp. xvi, 118. $3.00.

and incidents, rhythmically arranged, with a profusion of expanding symbols, and with a complex evolution of themes."

One's judgment of Brown's criticism must, I suppose, depend to some extent on whether or not one accepts this hypothesis. It must also depend somewhat on whether one shares his admiration for E. M. Forster. Perhaps I, as a practising novelist, am least of all capable of knowing whether Brown's approach is sound or not. What matters most to any novelist is his personal feeling about work in progress. He feels, rather than knows, when he is on the right track. He is much safer when he relies on character than on a pre-established scheme. The novelists who plan their work "in sonata form," as Virginia Woolf did, are almost certain to lose themselves in delicate nuances. The writing of a novel is a mysterious business, like life itself. The novelist who approaches his work with an excessively strict thematic idea is only too likely to diminish his vitality by subordinating the tough intractability of living characters to fit a pre-arranged pattern. In my view—shared by Somerset Maugham—E. M. Forster is a conspicuous sinner in this respect and only in *A Passage to India* does he allow life to take him by the throat.

But it well may be that E. K. Brown understood the art of the novel a great deal better than most practising novelists do. Above all he understood that no other form of art is so difficult to criticize, because no other form so defies one's capacity to visualize it as a whole. "When the reader of novels turns critic," he writes at the beginning of his first essay, "what is the subject he criticizes? It is not the novel he has laid aside but rather the fragments of it that have lodged in his memory. Some of these fragments remain not because of any intrinsic importance, but simply because they hook on to something in his mind."

To that sentence, which is the key of Brown's entire attitude to criticism, any novelist would say a hearty Amen. Working from that axiom, Brown has excellent reasons for his particular admirations. What is a novel worth, if the reader remembers only a few stray incidents and forgets, or fails to feel, the meaning of the whole? Brown therefore believes that those novels are the best in which the writer has created, through a rhythmic pattern of phrase, incident, and character, through such expanding symbols as Proust's recurrent musical phrase and Forster's use of the hayfield in *Howard's End*, a pervading spirit of permanence which lives and moves like a ghost throughout the whole work.

In his first chapter, Brown shows how earlier writers such as Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Zola, George Moore, and others

have tried to bind their novels together by using repetitive patterns based on phrase, character, and incident. Mr. Micawber, whose character remains static, becomes permanently fixed in our minds because of his constant repetition of slogans he professes but never follows. Becky Sharp attains a true and appalling permanence by constantly repeating the same pattern in the various incidents of her life.

It is when Brown deals with expanding symbols, and uses Proust and Forster as examples, that he becomes most interesting and illuminating. With this reviewer he achieved a minor triumph; he almost persuaded me that *Howard's End* is a great novel, even though I still believe that its beginning is inept and its characters more shadowy than they need be. In a masterpiece of recapitulation, Brown recovers the book's spirit, condenses and clarifies it, and presents it so freshly that I want to read it again.

Indeed, *Rhythm in the Novel* makes you want to re-read nearly all the writers with whom it deals. Brown's mastery of detail never for a moment clouds the interest of the reader or his sense of Brown's great love for the works he is engaged in illuminating. *Rhythm in the Novel* is therefore critical writing at its best. Brown reveals an ancient truth: to understand a man's work, you must love it. Love it, not merely admire it.

THE ELIZABETHAN AGE* — MILLAR MACLURE

"The Elizabethan age," says Professor Rowse at the beginning of this admirable book, the most impressive though not the most finished of his contributions to English history, "is not something dead and apart from us; it is alive and all around us and within us." The opening chapter provides a fine set of variations on this theme, as we are invited to contemplate the living monuments of that time—the great houses, the miniatures, the ornate tombs and prideful effigies, the jewellery—and the living memories of Elizabeth, the Prayer Book, Shakespeare. But indeed the whole book amplifies our knowledge of this mighty legacy, in a detailed description of the structure of that society, at once base and noble, squalid and splendid, highly integrated yet immensely varied, in which greatness was the fashion.

Here are gathered in one convenient place the conclusions of the

**The England of Elizabeth: The Structure of Society.* By A. L. ROWSE. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd. [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited]. Pp. xvi, 547. $5.00.

specialist historians of land tenure, of the sixteenth-century "industrial revolution," of the constitution and the law, of the Church and of education. All these special topics are illuminated by a preliminary review of the labours of the Elizabethan historians and antiquaries, of Lambarde, Stow, and above all Camden. The book is full of Camden's phrases and of Camden's spirit: if Professor Rowse has an Elizabethan counterpart it is Camden. Like the Elizabethan scholars and like Leland, who "was totally inflamed with a love to see thoroughly all those parts of this . . . opulent and ample realm that [he] had read of," who saw them, "and noted in so doing a whole world of things very memorable," he knows the lines of history on the face of the land and the vast treasures of local records. He has compiled and interpreted a mass of such scattered materials: diaries of country gentlemen, parish registers, quarter sessions rolls, household books, etc. Instead of the lifeless composite picture we see the rich multiplicity of concrete details; dozens of illuminating examples are treated at large. The conditions of land tenure are illustrated, for instance, from the Hovenden maps of the estates of All Souls; industrial development from the account books of the German copper miners in the Lake District; the administration of justice by the J.P.'s from the uproarious case of Ellen Smith of Norton tried before Cannock in Staffordshire, and so on. This book is distinguished among many others on the Elizabethan age by the copious and intelligent use of such materials.

Any survey of Elizabethan society becomes in effect a history of the rise of the gentry, and this work is a celebration of the achievements of those "hard-headed, hard-fisted families" who were at once the builders and the framework of that society; out of their vitality it grew and upon their solidity it rested. Nor is it possible to disagree with the theory here proposed, that expansion within a conservative situation produced the peculiar dynamic of the age. "It is probable," concludes Professor Rowse, "indeed I think it certain, that the hierarchical nature of that society was no bar, but a stimulus, to creative achievement; authority, by setting bounds, gave form and channel to those energies, stimulated their action, increased their force; difference excited emulation, diversity gave colour and character, achievement received recognition, ambition was admired, genius and greatness of spirit adored."

For such aspects of this creative achievement as fall within the scope of this study the author's admiration is intense and uncritically pervasive. Nostalgia, he declares in speaking of John Stow, is the sign of the true artist; he is unashamedly nostalgic himself. He writes in a lean time, a time of "erosion of capital in low-grade consump-

tion," of "over-regulation," and he exults in the ambition of the Elizabethan *parvenus*, in the conspicuous consumption of a period of expanding capital. It is possible for him to take a rosy view of the tax-farmer Mr. Customer Smythe, for example, because he continually adheres to the criterion of "common-sense," the "sensible." What is "sensible" is to be praised, and the "sensible" is the materialistic, the energetically imperfect. There were "no flies" on Smythe, but for the government it was "the most profitable way of being defrauded." Anyone who gets things done, makes his pile, builds a house, buys an office, is "sensible."

Everywhere one finds this admiration of the "sensible" linked with a confessed distrust of idealism of any kind. Burghley is praised because he was a pure pragmatist; he contended that "gentility is nothing else but ancient riches," and he had "the justification of success, the most powerful justification known to history." To theology Professor Rowse is indifferent or hostile, and his portrait of Elizabethan society from the ecclesiastical standpoint is gravely deficient in sympathy. Granted that it is hard to love a Puritan or to celebrate enthusiastically the pallid virtues of some of Elizabeth's bishops, surely it is a fault of judgment to approve unreservedly the transition "from useless theology to coal," "from prayer to profit," to deplore the "unproductive" intellectual energy displayed in religious controversy, to declare that God's will may be dismissed as a "superfluous concept" in assessing the value of Jewel's *Apology,* to see it as a limitation in Hooker that he was untouched by agnosticism. (We are adjured to see the barbarity of punishments and the sale of offices in the context of the time, but we are apparently to judge sixteenth-century theological issues by the standards of a cultivated nineteenth-century agnosticism.) It is presumably this hostility to the ideal, the abstract, which leads to such strange casual judgments as, "No Puritan ever had much historic sense," or, "Spenser, least historically minded of poets."

There is more to this point of view than a genial if intransigent prejudice. There is a governing assumption that "common-sense" is somehow instinctive ("innate") and English, that there is (or was) a dichotomy between this insular virtue and "mere ideas," and that the age of Elizabeth owed its magnificence to a sort of incandescence of this quality in the body politic. So long as by "common-sense" is meant only a consciousness of the limitations of pure theory in government and law and economics, this is a useful, if somewhat limited, assumption. But if one accepts (as Professor Rowse apparently does) the popular Renaissance definition of the historian as antiquary-

patriot-moralist, then surely at many points in this work the first two attributes have overwhelmed the third, and the Philistine is glorified.

"The men," we are told at one point, "are more important than what they suppose." But it is what men suppose that makes them important; whatever else we know about them is gossip, wonderful gossip perhaps, but still gossip, and history is more than that. Perhaps in the second volume of this study, which is to deal with the achievements of the age in action and the life of the mind, this imbalance of judgment may be corrected. Even here, amidst admiration of the sheer gross energy of the Elizabethans, there are many glimpses of an ideal more precise and subtle, an achievement of which profit was but the material cause. Expelled by the centrifugal forces of the Reformation and the voyages of discovery from their snug corporate existence as an outer province of medieval Christendom, Tudor Englishmen explored their land, their language, and themselves in a single passion of self-realization. On the way they uncovered all their vices, behaved with insufferable *panache,* but in the end found the ultimate tragedy of all human experience, and faced it unafraid. One finds their epigraph in the calm words of Ascham, which are quoted on the last page of this book: "Increase hath a time, and decay likewise, but all perfect ripeness remaineth but a moment: as is plainly seen in fruits, plums and cherries; but more sensibly in flowers, as roses and such like, and yet as truly in all great matters."

THE THOUGHT OF C. S. PEIRCE* — HENRY S. LEONARD

This balanced, temperate, and rounded exposition of the work done by C. S. Peirce in all those fields of philosophy on which he wrote will be of value both to students as yet unacquainted with Peirce and to those scholars who are already trying to evaluate the contributions of this extraordinary intellectual figure. It was not, however, the intention of Professor Goudge merely to offer a survey of Peirce's philosophical positions. The book under review propounds and aims to substantiate a general interpretative hypothesis to the effect "(*a*) that Peirce's ideas fall naturally into two broad groups whose opposite character is a reflection of a deep conflict in his thinking; and (*b*) that the conflict can best be understood in terms of what I shall call his 'naturalism' and his 'transcendentalism'" (p. 4).

**The Thought of C. S. Peirce.* By THOMAS A. GOUDGE. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1950. Pp. xii, 360. $5.00.

The evidence offered to support this hypothesis is of two sorts. Evidence of the first sort consists of a careful and well-documented exposition of Peirce's ideas, divided into his "naturalistic" and his "transcendental" ideas. This survey provides the major bulk of the book and constitutes its primary contribution. The adequacy of the survey as evidence for the hypothesis is conditional on the truth of three points which will be considered shortly: (1) that the expositions are faithful to the original intent of Peirce; (2) that the ideas expounded in the two parts are respectively naturalistic and transcendental, as claimed; and (3) that these naturalistic and transcendental doctrines do in fact conflict.

Evidence of the second sort consists in a review, in the concluding chapter of the book, of Peirce's career, designed to show that both inheritance and environment conspired to make such a conflict of tendencies in Peirce's thought antecedently probable. The argument in this chapter is surely persuasive.

Let us return to the three propositions necessary to the adequacy of the evidence of the first sort. (1) In this reviewer's opinion, the report and exposition of Peirce's views is thoroughly reliable and generally lucid. It is in fact this feature of the work that make it an appropriate introduction to Peirce. At the same time, since the author is using this exposition to substantiate a hypothesis concerning the general character of Peirce's ideas, he is deprived of the right to exercise any principle of selectivity by reference to which he could otherwise suppress or minimize his treatment of the less enduring features of Peirce's thought and thus provide himself the space in which to treat with greater adequacy the more important of Peirce's contributions. That the author resists any such temptation is a tribute to his impartiality and objectivity. But it also has the unhappy result that yet another exposition of Peirce's work, particularly enlarging on the details of his work in formal logic and in the general theory of signs, waits to be written.

(2) In order to judge whether or not the ideas expounded in the two parts are respectively naturalistic and transcendental, one must needs be possessed of a more precise and meaningful characterization of these two terms. Fortunately, Professor Goudge has anticipated this need and has supplied a characterization of each term by eight statements (pp. 5, 6). I set these statements here in parallel columns and in the order in which Professor Goudge presents them, but renumbered to facilitate future references.

Naturalism	*Transcendentalism*
1. Scientific method is the only means of obtaining knowledge.	i. The appeal to feeling, sentiment, or instinct is a more important source of knowledge than the appeal to reason or science.
2. Theory and practice are interdependent and inseparable components of human life.	ii. Theory and practice have no intrinsic connection with one another.
3. Conceptual precision, achieved by logical analysis, is a primary desideratum in philosophy.	iii. Since (*a*) the most important philosophical ideas are of necessity vague, (*b*) no precise definition of them is possible.
4. There is no good reason for accepting a Platonic realism with respect to universals.	iv. Metaphysical construction is a more significant activity than logical analysis.
5. (*a*) Man is a product of the natural world, with which he is continuous; and (*b*) his philosophical account of the world requires the use of non-subjective and non-personal categories.	v. There are convincing logical reasons for espousing a Platonic realism of universals.
6. All *a priori* modes of thought about matters of fact are illegitimate.	vi. Since (*a*) man's inner life provides him with the truest insights into the nature of the universe, (*b*) he may properly interpret the latter in terms of highly personal or anthropomorphic categories.
7. The attempt to construct a "system" of philosophy in which the natural world is "explained" should be regarded with suspicion.	vii. *A priori* modes of reasoning are both necessary and legitimate in dealing with such matters as the origin and destiny of man and the universe.
8. The conclusions of philosophy must be broadly compatible with the ideas of common sense.	viii. (*a*) The aim of philosophical thought is to produce a comprehensive system of knowledge which will be ultimate and final. (*b*) Its conclusions must inevitably differ from the superficial opinions of common sense.

It is not relevant to the present discussion to consider the extent to which these pairs of eight statements fix meanings for the terms "naturalism" and "transcendentalism" that conform to customary intentions for these terms. The statements may be viewed as providing nominal, hence indisputable, definitions of the terms. So considered, one may remark that the definitive sets of statements do considerably clarify the intentions of the author as he uses the

defined terms; and this much can be affirmed despite the fact that several of the defining statements themselves stand in need of further clarification and precision. We shall return to this point shortly.

The immediate question is, do the doctrines of Peirce expounded in the book under review have the naturalistic and transcendental characteristics attributed to them by the author of that book? In this reviewer's opinion, they do have on the whole the characteristics attributed to them, and the indication of these characteristics does shed considerable light on Peirce's thought and work.

(3) With this, however, we come to our final question: Do the naturalistic and transcendental doctrines in fact conflict in the manner claimed?

There can be no doubt that Peirce's writings do contain conflicting, even mutually contradictory, statements. Neither is there any doubt that Professor Goudge has successfully classified the views held by Peirce under two headings so that the views in either group are more or less self-contained and mutually harmonious while they are at the same time more or less in conflict with the views in the other group. Thus the responsibility of the analytic historian is effectively discharged.

But a problem is raised for the philosopher, as opposed to the historian of philosophy. Are these naturalistic and transcendental moments of thought *inevitably* in conflict; must a philosopher, in the interests of self-consistency, reject at least one of them *in toto*; or may he not, instead, undertake to reconcile them? If the latter, then is not the proper criticism of Peirce one to the effect that his (praiseworthy) inclusion of naturalistic and transcendental moments failed to reconcile these moments?

The questions just raised oblige us to re-examine the two sets of eight statements defining naturalism and transcendentalism. Let us say that two statements "conflict" if explicative enlargements of the two statements contain mutually contradictory propositions. Two statements at least one of which was vague could be said to "conflict but be compatible" if they conflicted but were such that equally permissible alternative enlargements of the statements were mutually consistent.

Any treatment of vague statements is, of course, debatable. But this reviewer believes that a case could be made to the effect that, on the whole, the statements defining naturalism conflict but are compatible with those offered to define transcendentalism. In his opinion, the only incompatible pairs are: 1 with vii, 1 with viii (*a*), 4 with v, 5(*b*) with vi(*b*), and 6 with vii. And in most of these cases, only

minor modifications of the statements involved would make the statements compatible. For example, were one to delete "ultimate" and "final" from viii(*a*) and "legitimate" from vii, 1 would be made compatible with viii(*a*) and 6 compatible with vii. The following lists all the remaining pairs of statements drawn from the two sets that appear to conflict, even though they are compatible: 1 with i, 2 with ii, 3 with i, iii, and iv, 7 with iv and with vii(*a*), 8 with viii(*b*). No other pairs with members drawn one from each set seem even to conflict. Indeed, certain pairs seem to be mutually reinforcing: 5(*a*) and i, 8 and i, 8 and vi(*b*). At the same time, certain other pairs with members drawn both from one set seem to conflict (although to be compatible): 5(*b*) with 8, i with viii(*b*), vi(*b*) with viii(*b*).

If any reconciliation of naturalism with transcendentalism is eventually attained, might it not be that the joint influence of these two moments on such a man as Peirce will have contributed to the attainment of that happy result?

STUDIES IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY POETIC* — Roy Daniells

One comes out of this book as from a thicket of blackberries, wondering whether it was really worth all the laceration. Not that there were no berries; on the contrary, Miss Wallerstein offers the fruit of wide research and careful comparison, as readers of her previous work on poetics have learned to expect. She enlarges the boundaries of the criticism of metaphysical poetry, no inconsiderable feat in view of the enormous number of studies in that field since Grierson first edited the poems of Donne. The book falls into two solid parts, linked by the attention given in each to Marvell's poetry. In the first part, the funeral elegy as a *genre* is related to the aesthetic of the period and in the second there is an exploration of the background of Marvell's thought even to the medieval boundaries of that background in Victorine philosophy and other developments of Augustinianism about which most of us are painfully ignorant. Some of the ground covered is familiar enough, such as the influence of emblems on the metaphysicals, which Mario Praz revealed to English readers, but much is well chosen for new inquiry, whether boldly into the *genre* of funeral elegy or minutely into precedents for Marvell's "various light" and "greenness." One can at least agree

**Studies in Seventeenth-Century Poetic.* By Ruth Wallerstein. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press [Toronto: Burns & MacEachern]. 1950. Pp. x, 421. $6.25.

that the author "has really gone into medieval thought on a number of these topics," as noted in the wreath of praise from Douglas Bush which adorns the dust cover.

But good wine needs no bush, and this, from long keeping one supposes, is slightly sour and rasps the tongue. The style of the book is atrocious and has not even the excuse of haste. "These studies have been very long in the making," is the author's opening sentence. Not only does the volume break into two, which may have been unavoidable, but the looseness of the chapters "Backgrounds and Currents" and "The Various Light" could have been avoided and the reader saved much wandering, by a little editorial labour. In the sentence by sentence exacerbation of the reader's sensibility, however, lies the most severe trial imposed by Miss Wallerstein. Her monologue betrays hardly anywhere what could be called a gift of utterance. Can it be that the graduate research seminar—

> The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
> And murmuring of innumerable bees—

has passed over unmodified into this volume of criticism? Sentences such as the following are all too common: "It is as the monarch of a limited monarchy that Marvell now sees Cromwell, the executive rather in a balanced state, with essentially Cromwell's own view, a monarch in fact not too far from the monarchy which Dryden was to uphold on behalf of Charles II in the days of the struggle with Shaftesbury." A paragraph can be a maze of minor infelicities: prepositions are handled awkwardly ("Marvell's views in the Cromwell poems and in his later life"); relatives cry for their lost antecedents (". . . there is an attack upon that use of the senses or sensual sublimation as a key to ecstasy or in ritual symbolism which was an important element in the devotion of the Counter-Reformation"); images tread over one another ("Already in the poem's tone the lucid and far-seeing intensity of Marvell's brief period of poetic vision is sinking into deep and voiceless chambers of his nature and leaving on the surface the somber intellectual feeling of his later years" or "Marvell is stung to one gleam of his earlier vision"). Punctuation comes and goes in these pages; emphasis is sought by "such" and "so" in their conversational use; even the sound of words smites the ear with a flat hand—"a few lyrics that are, slight as they are, supreme in their art."

It is a sad thing to see a humanist and a student of Dryden and Marvell, those masters of the perspicuous and the witty, fall into woolliness. For a humanist is *ipso facto* a lover of words and a follower of those who can master and marshal them. Perhaps the

explanation lies in Miss Wallerstein's willing rejection of aesthetic pleasure in the service of ideological inquiry. If so, we cannot applaud the sacrifice, particularly when Marvell is misquoted in a kind of indifference to even his words. This reviewer, at least, does not believe that

> All around about us lie
> Deserts of vast eternity

can replace the original

> And yonder all before us lie
> Desarts of vast Eternity

or that

> As if his highest plot
> To tend the Bergamot

will serve for Marvell's

> As if his highest plot
> To plant the Bergamot

either in sound or in sense.

It palliates nothing that Miss Wallerstein is no beginner but an eminent scholar. All the more is expected of her. We say of religion without the love of God that it is fruitless. What shall we say of a humanistic critic without a sense of style?

THE BRITISH OVERSEAS* J. B. CONACHER

Mr. Carrington's *The British Overseas* is an ambitious and, on the whole, successful attempt to write history on the grand scale—the sort of book that is to be welcomed in an age of specialization. It is well named for it is not a formal history of the British Empire. Rather it is the story of the restless activity of the British people wherever they have gone under the British flag. Nineteen of its twenty-one chapters are devoted to the period after 1783 since the author is primarily interested in the Empire that survived to the present century. The explorations of the sixteenth and the colonization of the seventeenth centuries are therefore dealt with in perfunctory fashion.

There is a tremendous amount of factual information packed into the thousand-odd pages of *The British Overseas,* and for this reason the general reader will not easily sit down to read it through from cover to cover. It will be a useful book for undergraduates studying imperial history, for it contains an excellent narrative of events, a copious supply of maps and illustrations, and a useful

**The British Overseas: Exploits of a Nation of Shopkeepers.* By C. E. CARRINGTON. Cambridge: At the University Press [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited]. 1950. Pp. xxiv, 1092. $9.00.

summary or "argument" at the beginning of each chapter, but it is to be regretted that there are no suggestions regarding more specialized reading on the numerous topics that are treated; Mr. Carrington's guidance here would have been very valuable. In short this is both more and less than a textbook. It would seem that the author's prime aim was to write a scholarly and convincing *apologia* for the British Empire, whose history he knows and loves so well. "The permanent settlement of the British in the empty lands of the temperate zone" he regards as the major achievement in the Empire's history (p. xix). His central thesis is to be found in the statement (p. 496) "that the common belief in an Empire which gradually grew without direction is quite unjustified." "Almost every British colony," he continues, "was deliberately founded by a body of settlers according to a preconceived plan and, generally speaking, the more complete the plan the more successful the colony." The settlers are his first interest but he also devotes a good deal of sympathetic consideration to the work of the British Protestant missionaries, whom he shows to have played a very important role in the opening of the new lands, even though their concern for the natives often brought them in conflict with the ideas of the colonists.

On the whole, Mr. Carrington is most persuasive, but occasionally he will antagonize non-British readers with what they may consider an attitude of self-rightousness or complacency. For instance, of Ghandi he says that "any other government would have hanged him" (p. 949). His judgments are less detached and his Conservative bias more pronounced as he approaches the history of his own generation. He makes out a convincing case for the Boer War but does not consider at any length the arguments of the Little Englanders against it. He allots forty-five pages to the causes of the war, its course, and the ultimate settlement, but he makes no mention of the important role played by Campbell-Bannerman in regaining the confidence of the Boers and promoting the Union of the South African colonies. He shows little love for the Irish, but finds it convenient to include them with the British peoples in the statistics he has compiled to illustrate the remarkable growth in population of the British overseas. The tone of his few slighting remarks about De Valera (pp. 904, 905) smacks more of the Unionist politician than of the scholarly historian. Mr. Carrington obviously lacks enthusiasm for the Statute of Westminster and tends to minimize its significance (pp. 902-3); yet in another place (p. 1017) he makes the surprising statement that "since the Statute of Westminster the Commonwealth could hardly be described as a sovereign state." Most dominion observers would have

considered the terms "Commonwealth" and "sovereign state" incompatible both before and after 1931.

Inevitably there will be parts of Mr. Carrington's narrative familiar to most readers, but there are few who will not find something fresh. The sections on Canada are adequate, but one feels that the author's interests lie more with the other dominions; South Africa alone receives 103 pages to Canada's 88. Many Canadians will be surprised to read that "the British North America Act stands as one of the most efficient instruments ever devised by man" (p. 558), although Mr. Carrington takes pains to justify the statement. A few slips in fact (on p. 876 Currie is incorrectly called "a career officer of the small Canadian permanent force") and in spelling (on p. 908 Mackenzie King's name is mis-spelt McKenzie) are easily excused in such a large work.

Mr. Carrington attaches great importance to personalities and his numerous biographical sketches are an attractive feature of the work, which greatly add to its interest. The two Empire builders who receive the fullest attention are, perhaps significantly, Gibbon Wakefield and Sir George Grey. Quotations from those of the Empire builders who wrote are also used to good effect. Mr. Carrington's style, although not brilliant and occasionally marred by hackneyed phrases or repetitions, is for the most part clear and straightforward, an important consideration in a work that runs to almost half a million words. *The British Overseas* should be regarded as an important work in the field of imperial history for many years.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Growth of Scientific Ideas. By WILLIAM P. D. WIGHTMAN. Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd [Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited]. 1950. Pp. xii, 495. $7.50.

Dr. Wightman's book is a significant addition to the literature dealing with science for the citizen. It is not, however, a popular history of science, but rather an informed study of scientific thought in terms of the growth of a few dominant ideas. Roughly two-thirds of the book is devoted to a discussion of the rise and development of the concepts of matter and motion. The remaining one-third deals similarly with the concept of life. The author has not attempted to carry his treatment beyond the end of the nineteenth century, so that

the discussion of physics concludes with the work of Maxwell and Hertz, and the discussion of biology with the work of Weismann. The book is, therefore, wholly concerned with the background of contemporary science.

Unlike such writers as Crowther, Farrington, and Hogben, Dr. Wightman does not hold that socio-economic factors are the primary determinants of scientific thought. On the contrary, he holds that ideas have an inner dynamic of their own which determines in large measure their history. His point of view here has been influenced, as he states, by the philosophical doctrines of Collingwood and Whitehead. Hence, throughout the book he seeks to show "that no scientific entity—atom, organ, or wave—is *merely* itself, but is constantly evolving in a context of associated ideas" (p. vi). Scientific knowledge is thus "organic" in character. It does not accumulate like a heap of pebbles, but grows like a living thing. "The old writer knew what he was talking about when he wrote of the 'tree of knowledge' " (p. 114).

From this perspective Dr. Wightman discusses the birth of scientific notions among the Greeks; the rise of terrestrial and universal mechanics with the work of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton; and the development of the concepts of heat, light, matter, and electromagnetism as a result of investigations by Boyle, Fresnel, Dalton, Faraday, and Maxwell. At various points, for example in his description of the work of Ampère, he succeeds in showing unfamiliar relations among familiar ideas. He also calls attention to certain neglected masterpieces, such as Borelli's *De Motu Animalium* (1680), and indicates their proper place in the stream of science. When he deals with the fundamental concepts of biology, Dr. Wightman naturally devotes much space to evolution. Yet he holds that the central problem of biology, "viewed as the science of *living* things, is undoubtedly that of assimilation and growth" (p. 430). The researches of men such as Claude Bernard are probably more important in the long run than the evolutionary theories of Lamarck and Darwin.

Dr. Wightman writes pleasantly, and manages to deal freshly with even hackneyed themes. Despite the dangers of his "organic" theory of knowledge, he employs it on the whole judiciously. One beneficial consequence of it is that the role of hypotheses and assumptions in science receives appropriate emphasis. A corrective is thus provided for the common misconception that science deals exclusively with "hard facts." By displaying the history of scientific ideas as a series of attempts to solve the problems faced by men in their dealings

with nature, the book supports its author's conviction that "science is a struggle no less charged with humanistic value than the struggle for political liberty or national expression" (p. vi).

T. A. GOUDGE

Tobias Smollett: Doctor of Men and Manners. By LEWIS MANSFIELD KNAPP. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press [Toronto: S. J. Reginald Saunders and Company Limited]. 1949. Pp. xiv, 362. $7.50.

The legend of Smollett as a peevish malcontent, fostered by his own candid *Travels* and by Sterne's "Smelfungus," as a coarse and brutal novelist (the character of Roderick Random, the carnage aboard the *Thunder,* etc.) with no sympathy for his characters (e.g. the history of Miss Williams), has been a long time a-dying. The author of *Humphry Clinker* has never had the cards stacked in his favour and his rise in public esteem has been slow and arduous. Too often—with all that the adjectives imply—the "*learned* Dr. Smollett" suffered by being compared with the "*inimitable* Mr. Fielding." Like Katherine Mansfield's friend who moaned about the "hor-rible" quality of Smollett's realism, critics have hurled uncomplimentary epithets at him, without bothering to find out if he himself might have been different from the people he portrayed.

However, in the last twenty-five years Smollett criticism, based on the solid research of a small group made up mainly of Americans, has tried to show the man and the author as he was. In the 1920's, two Yale professors started the ball rolling: Howard S. Buck wrote two penetrating studies on the text of *Peregrine Pickle* and on *Smollett as a Poet,* and E. S. Noyes published the first authoritative edition of Smollett's *Letters.* Since that time very valuable contributions in book form have been made by George Kahrl (Elmira), Claude Jones (California), Louis Martz (Yale), F. W. Boege (Queen's College), and Francesco Cordasco (Long Island University), and important articles have been written by A. D. McKillop, Rufus Putney, H. P. Vincent, L. F. Powell, Alice Parker, and others. However, none of these researchers has contributed as much as Professor Knapp to our present knowledge of Smollett: since 1929 he has published some eighteen articles on this author, and now this first-rate biography, containing several new portraits, brings together the results of his own wide research as well as the very latest discoveries of others. His book is an extremely well documented, sober (perhaps

too sober) performance, which makes obsolete all other biographies of Smollett, and will be the standard work of reference on him for years to come.

Professor Knapp advances nothing but what is based on fact and has been at great pains to reconstruct the life of Smollett in its most minute details. He has drawn on his extensive knowledge of English literary life in the eighteenth century and utilized all available sources in his documentation: contemporary periodicals and memoirs, public records in Scotland, England, and Jamaica, parish rate-books (to determine the different residences of Smollett in London), etc., and has been able to identify a surprising number of the minor figures with whom Smollett came in contact. However, perhaps because of his very thoroughness, Professor Knapp tends to discuss certain of these peripheral figures at some length, thus occasionally slowing up the text with material which might properly have been relegated to the notes—although the notes and references (always carefully done) are numerous enough.

However, these are but tiny blemishes, which do not in the least detract from the great value of this indispensable biography. Professor Knapp has gathered an impressive array of facts but, more important still, has shown us at last in a new perspective a Smollett who was not only a navy surgeon, physician, novelist, critic, historian, and political writer, but over and above all a typical eighteenth-century gentleman, eminently worthy to have associated with the greatest men of letters of his time. Smollett, who called Samuel Johnson the great Cham of literature, could rightfully have claimed that he himself was, briefly, the great Cham's precursor.

There is a kind of hesitation that paralyses all literary students embarking on a study of an author of whom no critical biography exists; henceforth, however, students of Smollett can sail full steam ahead: the course has been charted.

EUGENE JOLIAT

The Novel of Violence in America, 1920-1950. By W. M. FROHOCK. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press. 1950. Pp. viii, 216. $3.75.

W. M. Frohock, Associate Professor of French at Columbia, has analysed the violence manifested in a large number of the important novels written in America between 1920 and 1950. He makes a basic distinction between two strains of sensibility in these novels: one found in novels which he calls "novels of erosion," the other in

"novels of violence." His distinction is based in great part upon the role which time plays in the particular novel under discussion. In novels of erosion, time is the agent, predominating over all human effort. Characters are passive victims who change and evolve according to the will of time; they undergo rather than act. In the novel of violence, the role of time changes completely. Time in these novels is not the agent; it is not a question of what time does, but what a man does in the time allowed him. These novels are dominated by a sense of urgency. They culminate in decisive acts—usually self-destructive acts. The novelist feels that the way in which a man meets his destiny has rich significance, and that significance arises from man's vigorous participation in the struggle that is life. Thus in a sense novels of violence may be (or approach) tragedy. Technically the novel of violence resembles the action drama.

Although he speculates briefly about the economic and social reasons why the novel of violence seems to have become more prevalent in the 1930's, Professor Frohock is little concerned with the writing of literary history, and although he makes numerous and revealing comparisons between the novelists under discussion and other novelists—especially French, he also is little concerned with sources or influences or schools. His strength lies in his careful and sensitive reading of individual novels as unified works of art; his chief tool—ably used—is his explication.

The body of the book is made up of single chapter examinations of the novels of Dos Passos, Thomas Wolfe, James Farrell, James M. Cain, William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, John Steinbeck, and Ernest Hemingway. His guiding concept seems most rewarding when he applies it to Faulkner, Caldwell, Cain, and Hemingway. The book is concluded by a discussion of the ethical significance of the novel of violence, a discussion one wishes were longer and more complex.

GORDON ROPER

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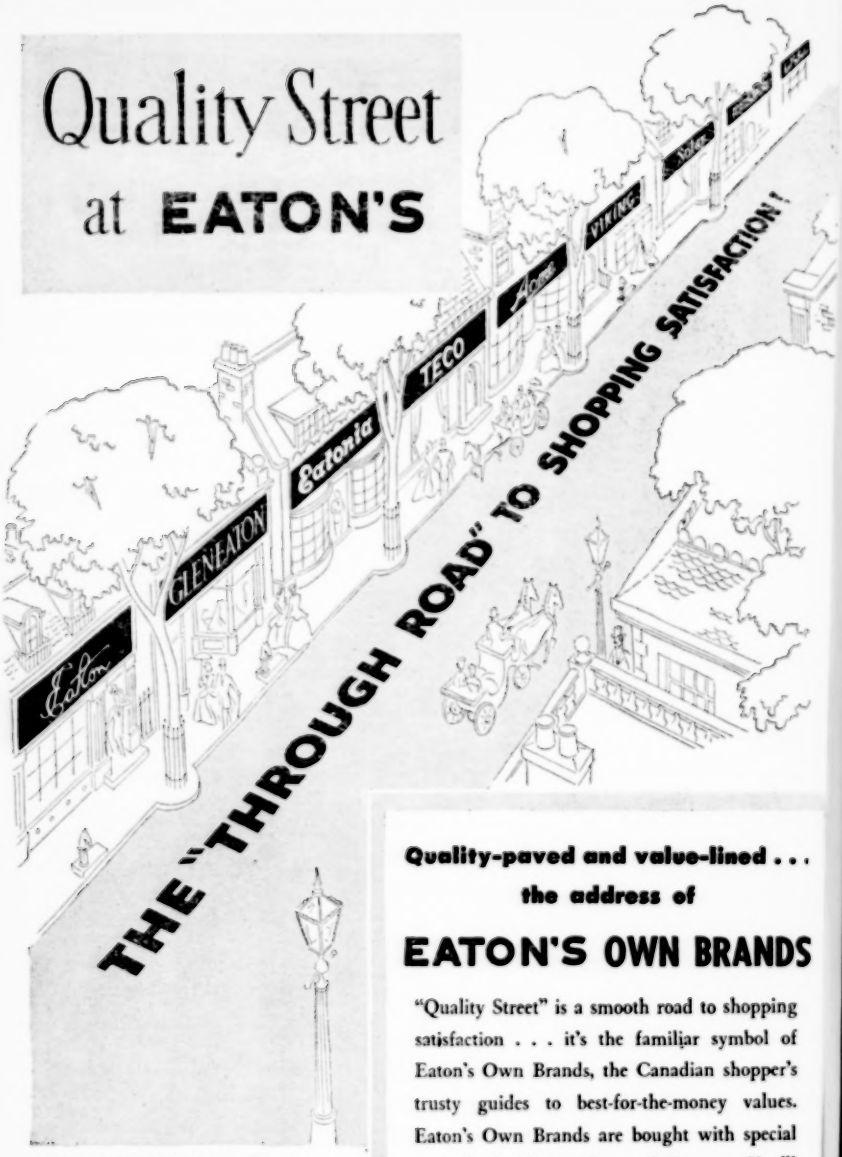

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